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The Bermudas triangle



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All hooked up



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Baggio penalty saves Italy

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Shahak: IDF unable to absorb haredim

By ARNOLD O'SULLIVAN

The IDF is not prepared to absorb yeshiva students if ordered to do so, Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak said yesterday.

"Without a doubt, there are many yeshiva students who, if drafted, would not succeed with us. By this I mean we won't be able to turn them into soldiers using our current methods," Shahak said. "The IDF will have to reshape itself. It will perhaps have to set up different units."

Shahak made the comments at a panel discussion at Beit Haterfuzoth, the Diaspora Museum, and it is the first time that he has addressed the matter.

Shahak, who retires next month, hinted at what many senior officers have been whispering for some time: Yeshiva students will not fit into the IDF framework and would be more of a burden than a benefit.

Top Manpower Branch officers have said that, in principle, they want every able-bodied person they can get, including yeshiva students, since this creates a larger pool of candidates to fill combat slots. But other senior Manpower Branch officers, including Lt.-Gen. Yehuda Duvdevani, head of the Defense Ministry's Youth, Nahal, and National Missions Branch, would not set up special units for haredim soldiers.

This is contrary to comments by Yehuda Duvdevani, head of the Defense Ministry's Youth, Nahal, and National Missions Branch. Duvdevani is pushing the idea of setting up exclusive haredim units, without contact with women, special time for religious studies and prayer, and grant kosher food, as a way to ease haredim into the service.

See IDF, Page 22



A pupil points to where the ceiling used to be while standing in the rubble of the collapsed gym at Beersheba's Comprehensive High School 6 yesterday.

Four panels to probe gym collapse

By NER KENON

Yehuda Duvdevani and Shlomo Toledo, both 13, whose bodies were found under the rubble of a collapsed ceiling in a Beersheba school gym yesterday morning, were buried side by side in the stunned city in the afternoon.

During his eulogy for Toledo, Education Minister Yitzhak Levy said, "We will investigate, we will search, but that will not bring back the children."

No fewer than four separate

committees were set up to look into the collapse of the ceiling at Comprehensive High School 6 during basketball practice Wednesday night. Renovations began on the ceiling of the 18-year-old gym about two weeks ago.

A youth injured in the collapse, Guy Zeltzer, 14, is recuperating from moderate injuries at Soroka Hospital. He told reporters that some pieces started falling from the ceiling before it collapsed, but no one paid it much attention.

"You don't connect the things," he said. "A few stones fell, but it seemed natural. No one imagined that from that, the whole ceiling would collapse."

"It is a shame that this type of negligence takes place in a country like ours," said Toledo's mother, Dalia, fighting back tears. "Things like this just don't happen. They knew there was a problem. They should have closed the gym and not let anyone enter. No one needed to die, and our lives could have carried on as usual."

Levy appointed an investigating committee, as did the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the Israel Police, and the Beersheba Municipality. One of the members of the Beersheba committee is the municipal engineer, who has overall responsibility for such renovations. Among the various questions the committees will ask is why there was no proper supervision at the site, and why the gym remained open during renovations.

See GYM, Page 22

Eitan calls for early elections

By LIAT COLLINS

Agriculture and Environment Minister Raphael Eitan yesterday called for early elections.

Eitan - who issued the call at a meeting at the Liberals Club in Tel Aviv - has called on several previous occasions for a form of national unity government led by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, but this is the first time he has publicly called for elections.

Responding to a question, he said that in the current situation, with each minister pulling in a different direction, there is no choice but to go to early elections.

Netanyahu yesterday told the heads of the coalition parties that the dispute with the Palestinians over the reciprocity issue has not yet been resolved. He reportedly criticized The Third Way, particularly party whip Yehuda Harel, and said its call for redeployment is weakening the government during the negotiations.

Third Way leader and Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani denied a newspaper report that the party had issued an ultimatum and would leave the coalition if the redeployment does not go ahead by July 15. Kahalani said there is no ultimatum and the party will examine each individual proposal thoroughly.

If the government fails to implement the second pullback by the end of the Knesset's summer session on July 29, The Third Way will act to bring about early elections, Harel said yesterday.

"If we find this coalition is incapable of carrying out the interim agreement, we'll go for early elections," he said.

Harel denied having given Netanyahu an ultimatum or a date on which his party would quit the government at their meeting on Wednesday, but said: "Today it's completely clear that we've reached a deal we can sign. Another week or two doesn't matter, but if by the

Knesset recess there is no agreement which is accepted by the Americans and Palestinians, then as far as we're concerned the government will have stopped functioning on this matter."

Netanyahu is also being pressured by coalition members who oppose the redeployment.

National Religious Party MKs are expected to discuss their stand at a closed meeting on Monday. The party seems split with Ministers Yitzhak Levy (Education) and Shaul Yahalom (Transport) and party whip Shmuryahu Ben-Tsur tending toward the opinion that the NRP can have greater influence if it remains in the coalition. MKs Nissan Slomiansky, Zvi Hendel, Haiman Porat, and Avner Shaki have signed a manifesto saying they would topple the government in any no-confidence motion following a redeployment.

Tension in the party mounted following remarks by former Ashkenazi chief rabbi Avraham Shapira to members of the Land of Israel Front lobby that they should act to bring the government down if the redeployment goes ahead. Shapira and former Sephardi chief rabbi Mordechai Eliahu are expected to make a decision on the subject next week. Netanyahu is expected to try to meet with them before they make their announcement.

Porat and other members of the Land of Israel Front have also criticized the idea of holding a public referendum on redeployment, although the idea was raised by Front head MK Michael Kleiner (Geshet). The idea has not been rejected by Netanyahu and it seems to have the support of several ministers, including Communications Minister Limor Livnat and the NRP ministers.

Today, Netanyahu is scheduled to meet with Labor leader Ehud Barak to discuss redeployment.

Michal Yudelman contributed to this report.

Faceless, commercialized affairs

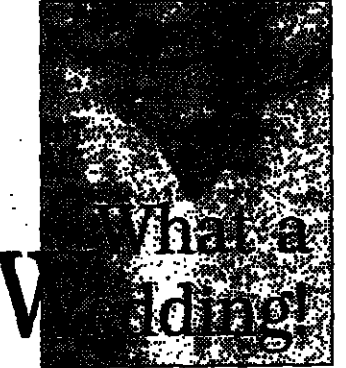
By LARRY DERFNER

At Sara's wedding in 1950, held in a little hall in Tel Aviv, the menu consisted of sandwiches, cake, and fruit. For gifts the guests brought glasses, plates, cookware, and, of course, the most popular wedding gift of that austere time - the Sifolux seltzer-maker. "We got about 10 of those," recalled Sara, 64.

Last summer she and her husband put on a wedding for one of their sons. It was held at a gaudy Tel Aviv banquet hall with a DJ, spicy Israeli food that didn't stop, and some 450 lively guests. Before the *huppa* was finished, the guests had already torn into the rolls and salads and made a mess of the tables.

Hardly any of them brought gifts; nearly all deposited checks into a box guarded by one of the waiters.

"It was a very happy affair," Sara said, even if she got a headache from all the noise. It was nothing like her other son's wedding, though, held years before in San Diego. That one



was much smaller and more intimate. During the *huppa*, the rabbi spoke at length about the bride and her family, whom he knew, and the guests listened.

"I liked that wedding better," Sara said. "It was nicer. More real."

Weddings say a lot about the society in which they're held, and what Israeli weddings say today about Israeli society is, for the most part, off-putting.

See AFFAIRS, Page 6

Israel agrees to Yassin's return

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH and MOHAMMED NAJIB

Israel has informed the Palestinian Authority that it will allow Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin to return to Gaza, according to Ahmed Tibi, an adviser to Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Tibi last night would not disclose when the PA was informed of the

decision, but said, "Israel notified the PA recently that in principle it will not prevent Yassin's return."

A senior government official confirmed that Israel has notified the PA that Yassin will be allowed back.

A Hamas leader in Gaza, Mahmoud Zahar, said it is now up to the PA or Israel to notify Egypt of the decision. "Because Egypt has refused Yassin entry until a

decision by Israel is made public, he is waiting in his hotel room in Khartoum, Sudan," he said.

See YASSIN, Page 22

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu

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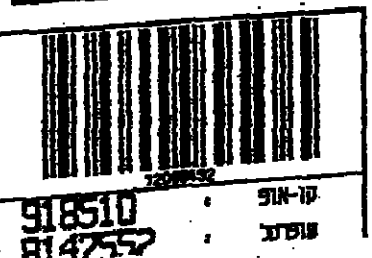
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Haifa	7:19 p.m.	8:32 p.m.
Beersheba	7:22 p.m.	8:20 p.m.
Eilat	7:18 p.m.	8:24 p.m.

Today
 in the Jerusalem Post
 Look for the American Festival
 News Bulletin (in Hebrew)

NEWS

in brief

Ariel gets municipal status

Hours before transferring command to Maj.-Gen. Moshe Ya'alon yesterday, outgoing OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan approved granting Ariel in Samaria municipal status. "Now Ariel is an integral part of Israel," Mayor Ron Nahman said, adding that he hoped to add several nearby settlements to his municipality. Dayan also authorized the establishment of Civil Guard posts in Judea and Samaria. They will begin operating within weeks, first in Ma'aleh Adumim and then in Givat Ze'ev. In addition, he authorized the establishment of local rescue and traffic units to be run by the residents of Judea and Samaria.

Margot Dudkevitch

Security guard stabbed in Jerusalem

A security guard was stabbed and lightly injured yesterday in the Silwan neighborhood of Jerusalem by an Arab assailant who escaped, according to police. The stabbing took place next to an archaeological dig that has been going on for several years, said police spokesman Shmuel Ben-Ruby, who added that the assailant, who lives near the dig, is known to police. The stabbing follows a week of protests and scuffles in the neighborhood, after Jews moved in to four apartments there on Monday. Israel Radio reported last night that MK Michael Eitan met with Faisal Hussein in Jerusalem on Tuesday to discuss the volatile situation in Silwan.

Elli Wohlgelegen

Beersheba underworld leader shot dead

Benny Mordo, considered one of the most powerful criminals in Beersheba, was shot to death there early yesterday, police said. Mordo, who had earlier worked as a police intelligence officer, was alone in his car at the time, and was hit by fire from several guns. Several years ago, after leaving the force, Mordo was involved in gang warfare in Beersheba. The police viewed the fighting as part of a turf battle over the drug trade and gambling.

Iim

Court extends remand of murder suspect

The Jerusalem Magistrate's Court yesterday extended by six days the remand of Ofir Ben-Simon, who is suspected of killing Anwar Mohammed Ali, 38, from the Shuafat refugee camp. The suspect, 25, is not cooperating with police investigators and has not given an account of what happened inside the soft drink truck the two were riding in en route to Ma'aleh Efrain on Wednesday. In east Jerusalem, mourners at Ali's funeral clashed with police.

Iim

France behind Ilya negotiations

By JAY BUSHINSKY

France was instrumental in arranging the impending exchange of 60 Lebanese and the corpses of 300 Itamar Ilya, one of the naval commandos killed in an abortive attack north of the Security Zone last September, a senior diplomatic source said yesterday.

The French role in expediting the deal and guaranteeing its implementation in strict accordance with the understandings reached by Israel and Lebanon was attributed to the lack of trust between the parties and the difficulties in communicating with Hizbullah.

France's role was confirmed by a senior government official.

June 17 was mentioned by the source as the target date for the swap. Among the bodies of Hizbullah gunmen to be transferred to the Lebanese authorities under the aegis of the International Committee of the Red Cross will be that of Hadi

Nasrallah, the son of Hizbullah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah.

"The agreement has been completed," the source said. "There are a few mechanical details which have to be worked out, but they should not pose any insurmountable problems."

France also is willing to play a constructive role with regard to

Israel's standing offer to evacuate the IDF from the security zone, he went on.

In Beirut, Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri tightened control over negotiations to save the deal, which came under danger of unraveling following interference by Amal.

"The prime minister met today

the representative of the International Committee of Red Cross in Lebanon [Jean Jacques Fressard] and asked him not to make contacts with any official or non-official Lebanese party about the swap operation," Hariri's press office said in a statement. "He asked the ICRC representative to make the contacts related

to this subject in Lebanon exclusively with the prime ministry because of its sensitivity.

"Negotiations between the Lebanese government and Israel via the ICRC are still going on. When these negotiations are over, the government will declare the results in due time," it said.

Amal, Hizbullah's rival, jeopardized the deal after it declared Wednesday it would not return the remains of Ilya it holds unless it too was made a party to the negotiations.

Amal has said it holds Ilya's scalp, while Hizbullah says it holds most of the remains of at least two commandos left behind during the raid.

Despite the slew of reports from Beirut detailing the deal, Israeli defense officials said nothing has been signed yet and urged restraint in the matter.

"When something is finalized, we will announce it," said one defense official.

Arish O'Sullivan and news agencies contributed to this report.

IAF strikes after SLA soldier killed

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Israel Air Force fighter jets struck at Hizbullah targets in south Lebanon yesterday after guerrillas blasted a South Lebanese Army vehicle, killing one militiaman and wounding two others.

The IDF Spokesman said the SLA vehicle was hit by a Sagger anti-tank missile as it was moving on a mountain road in the Jezzine region. The region is controlled by the SLA and is outside the security zone. One of the wounded militiamen was evacuated to a hospital in Israel while the other was treated for light wounds at a hospital in Marjayoun. The death of the SLA man brings to six the number killed so far this year.

In a statement issued in Sidon, Hizbullah claimed responsibility for the attack, which apparently prompted the air raid three hours later. Hizbullah said its fighters ambushed a convoy and identified the killed SLA fighter as Tony Hobeika.

Reports from Lebanon said two IAF jets fired air-to-surface missiles near the town of Joun, 15 kilometers north of the mainly Christian town of Jezzine. Security sources told AP the target was a guerrilla base, but that there were no reports of casualties from the attack yesterday evening.

Lebanese Army anti-aircraft gunners opened fire on the raiding jets, but missed, Lebanese officials told AP. The IDF said its aircraft reported direct hits and all planes returned safely to base.

Israelis, Palestinians back humanitarian law talks

By JAY BUSHINSKY and news agencies

Israeli and Palestinian representatives yesterday ended three days of what they called "frank and constructive" talks in Geneva on improving the application of humanitarian law in the territories. They agreed that international experts should meet in the autumn, according to a joint statement.

A senior government official said the impetus for the Geneva event was the UN Security Council deci-

sion taken after the Har Homa housing project was brought to its attention. The conference was attended by Israeli, Palestinian, and Swiss representatives.

"Switzerland was asked, as the repository of the Geneva Conventions, to invite the parties to the conflict" for a dialogue, the official said, adding that there were high-level contacts on this project "for several months."

He credited Swiss President Flavio Corti with having personally contributed to the "good atmosphere" which pervaded the session. But he termed the outcome "inconclusive."

Diplomatic sources said Israel had agreed to the conference being held at the expert level, but not at the political level.

An Israeli diplomat said the talks had taken place in a "friendly atmosphere" and looked for joint solutions to humanitarian problems. "Everyone defended his colors, but there was no animosity," he said.

"If it will continue to be done this way we have grounds for hoping, of coming to some understanding, to solve some problem issues, matters of concern to both parties," he added.

The resolutions urged the Swiss to convene a conference on the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which deals with treatment of civilians in time of war and aims to protect civilians during an occupation by a foreign power, to the territories.

"Significant conceptual differences have emerged concerning the implementation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, its relations with the peace process in the Middle East, and the security environment," the statement said.



Honoring 'Altalena' fallen

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu (from left), his wife Sara, Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo, and former prime minister Yitzhak Shamir yesterday attended the unveiling of a monument to those killed in the sinking of the IZL arms ship 'Altalena' on Tel Aviv's Bograshov Beach. The site faces where the 'Altalena' went down on June 20, 1948 under Palmah shelling ordered by David Ben-Gurion.

(Israel Sun)

Communicated



Jack Harounian is a Diamond Founder, a member of the International Board of Governors, a member of the Metropolitan Cabinet, and the International Chairman of Iranian Friends of Shazare Zedek. He was honored by Mayor Ehud Olmert, who made him a Trusted Friend of Jerusalem. While in Israel Jack donated an ambulance to M.D.A., Jerusalem.

Jack and Violet congratulate the State of Israel on the 50th Anniversary, and express the hope that the country will enjoy unity, security and permanent peace.

d16532

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The concert will include the world premiere of a selection of songs of praise composed by Yossele Rosenblatt, and classical cantorial works by leading cantors in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the State of Israel and in homage to Zion.

The concert will feature the voices of Chaim Adler, Yacov Orzech, Naftali Herzig, Eliezer Herzig and Shraga Herzig, and the Ramatayim Male Choir conducted by Richard Shevitsky; presented by Dr. Moti Fridman;

musical direction and piano accompaniment: Raymond Goldstein.

The concert will be held on Tuesday, June 23, 1998, at 8:30 pm in the courtyard of the museum

Tickets available from: Tower of David Museum; telephone: 02-6283276, Khayim, 02-6256869; Bimot, 02-6240896; Kastel, 02-6044725

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Begin wants Singer to explain to MKs why Oslo is pro-PLO

By LIAT COLLINS

MK Ze'ev (Benny) Begin (Likud) wants Yoel Singer, the former Foreign Ministry legal adviser who helped draw up the Oslo Accords, to appear before the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee to explain his statements that the accords had tended to be pro-PLO. His remarks appeared in the literary supplement of *Ha'aretz* this week.

Begin also suggested that Uri Savir, Foreign Ministry director-general at the time of Oslo, also be invited to speak to the committee. According to Begin, Singer was

shocked by the draft of the Oslo declaration of principles which tended to favor the Palestinian side. Despite his request, Singer was reportedly not allowed to draw up a new agreement, but was ordered to make only minimal changes to the draft.

Singer, reviewing a book by Savir on the Oslo process, wrote: "The draft was unprofessionally written. The ideas included in it seemed to me, in part, to be good, but in part leaned too much toward the Palestinian side."

He said he "feared that the enthusiasm of (Shimon) Peres, (Yossi) Beilin, [and their aides] about actu-

ally reaching an agreement with the PLO could make them miss its defects. I was not particularly impressed by their stories of the chemistry that existed at the Oslo talks, and I was convinced that apart from chemistry there should also be physics. That means, clearly, anchoring Israel's interests in the agreement. Therefore I decided to warn them in the bluntest way against signing the agreement."

"When people are saying there is no choice but to carry out the Oslo Accords, Singer should clarify how amateurish and pro-PLO was the agreement he prepared," Begin said.

Dayan hands over Central Command to Ya'alon

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan took over as deputy chief of general staff yesterday. Two hours earlier, he had handed over Central Command to former OC Intelligence Maj.-Gen. Moshe Ya'alon.

Many defense experts believe that this front, not Northern Command, is the most sensitive and in need of the best commanders.

Dayan said Central Command's mission is not just to provide security for the residents there, but to allow the peace process to continue. He said the settlers are the most threatened group in the Central Command and that it is imperative to give them not just security, but a sense of security.

"You have to be wise and just, but mainly effective," Dayan said.

Dayan took over Central Command in March 1996 with the aim of implementing the Oslo Accords, which he helped draft. Dayan, 50, has invested much effort in repairing security ties with the Palestinian Authority.

When Dayan first took over, many settlement leaders announced they would boycott him, claiming he was a brazenly political appointee by Yitzhak Rabin, who had involved him as OC Planning Branch, in the Oslo peace negotiations.

"People were very afraid when he took over," said Ariel Mayor Ron Nachman. "He was the man who carried out the policy of the government which froze us and wanted to eliminate us."

Nachman said that there were stormy meetings with Dayan, but



Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan (left) and Maj.-Gen. Moshe Ya'alon congratulate one another yesterday on their respective appointments as deputy chief of General Staff and OC Central Command.

(IDF Spokesman)

that after two-and-a-half years, most settler leaders grew to respect him. "He has a Jewish heart, cares, and knows how to balance the instructions he receives from the politicians with what has to be done

in the field," he said.

In public, settler leaders expressed support for Ya'alon, whom they know from his time as OC Judea and Samaria in 1992. But in private, they spoke of him in the same apprehensive tones which greeted Dayan.

"I am returning to a regional command in which I grew up," Ya'alon, 48, said upon taking command. "The situation today is certainly different than it was five years ago... and today's reality demands cooperation with the Palestinians in all areas and to allow coexistence with peace and security for both nations."

Central Command is also at the forefront of security relations with Jordan, and Dayan, who helped draft the peace treaty with Jordan, said these relations are of the utmost importance. Dayan said that the good ties he has helped forge have proven themselves even in times of crisis.

For now the joint exercises and close defense ties are on a low, operational level mostly connected to keeping peace along the border. The reports of a Jordanian strategic alliance are premature.

"It is mainly a functional, tactical relationship," Dayan said. "On the strategic level it has a much more overall and widespread characteristic and I believe that I will deal with this in my new task."

Dayan replaces Maj.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz, 50, who will be appointed chief of general staff in place of Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin Shahak on July 7.

Barak dismisses unity gov't idea

Labor Party leader MK Ehud Barak yesterday rejected a proposal to join a national unity government from Yisrael Ba'aliya's leader, Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky.

Sharansky reportedly told Barak that a unity government was vital before making crucial decisions such as the one on the pullback, in order to arrive at a national consensus. The two men met at Barak's initiative in

Sharansky's Tel Aviv bureau. Barak announced yesterday that he would travel to Cairo Monday in order to meet Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Michal Yudelman

Peace Now blasts plans for Ateret Cohanim concert

By ELLI WOHLGELER

Peace Now plans to protest if a concert planned for this month by the Ateret Cohanim organization in Jerusalem's Sultan's Pool is given the go-ahead by the municipality.

At issue is the city's intention to grant permission for the June 29 concert - featuring hasidic rock singer Avraham Fried. Peace Now says the concert is a political event. The city, it said, refused to give authorization to a planned concert last summer sponsored by the left-wing group Bat Shalom.

Fried performed last winter during fundraisers for settlers in

Hebron. The city, meanwhile, was set to close the agreement with Ateret Cohanim on Tuesday, but held up signing the contract at the last minute.

"Peace Now will protest in big numbers at the concert," said Hagit Yaari, spokeswoman for the group. "This is material help from the municipality going to a very right-wing extreme group that is bringing bloodshed and riots to Jerusalem." Ateret Cohanim executive director Yossi Baumol said his group was paying NIS100,000 to use Sultan's Pool, and had every right to do so.

"We are convinced that the city will not discriminate against us after having had so many meetings and never hinting that there will be a problem," Baumol said. "We understand that there are elements in the Left trying to influence them, and we will go to court if need be to ensure our rights."

Australian FM defends war criminal policy

By JAY BUSHINSKY

Visiting Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer yesterday defended his government's policy toward suspected Nazi war criminals and said Canberra "would be prepared to consider any legal suggestions about how our legal system be improved to deal with this type of situation."

He said the appeal submitted to him by the Simon Wiesenthal Center to deport two men, who served in the infamous Latvian Arajs Kommando, to Riga to stand trial for the murder of 30,000 Jews would be relayed to Australia's attorney-general.

"These cases from the World War II are incredibly difficult to take forward," he said. "You can rest assured that in Australia we don't have any desire to see people escape from the rule of law and the system of justice."

Downer spoke at a news conference immediately after a meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

He said Australia is "concerned about the lack of progress in the Middle East process" and said he hoped an agreement could be reached on the second redeployment "soon."

He also said he did not discuss the recent nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan with Netanyahu. But he went on to outline his country's position to security in South Asia and said that this effect "radiates to the Middle East and other parts of the world."

Downer said his government would like Israel to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, noting that only three other coun-



Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer (Gili Hadamy)

tries have not endorsed it: India, Pakistan, and Brazil. He said Brazil is on the verge of signing.

Downer said it appears the Knesset does not plan to investigate the Maccabiah bridge collapse which claimed the lives of four Australian athletes last year.

"I didn't get the impression in my discussions with the prime minister that he was on the verge of establishing a parliamentary investigation," Downer said.

Netanyahu, who plans a trip to Australia in August, promised to finish looking into the matter before he arrives, but left unclear whether he would agree to demands for compensation for the families of the victims.

Downer's itinerary takes him to Gaza today for talks with Palestinian Authority officials and afterwards to Egypt. PA Chairman Yasser Arafat will be absent, however, due to an ongoing visit to Italy.

AP contributed to this report.

Jewish leaders remember Cyprus camps

By THOMAS O'DWYER

LARNACA - More than 150 Jewish leaders from around the world yesterday commemorated the internment of Jewish refugees by the British in Cyprus between 1946 and 1949.

Arab missions in Cyprus protested strongly against the high profile given to the events by the Cypriot government. One event was attended by the president of Cyprus and another by the minister of commerce.

The mission was organized by Keren Hayesod - representing Jews from all countries except the United States. After two days tour-

ing the island, Keren Hayesod officials invited Minister of Tourism and Commerce Nicos Rolandis to unveil a plaque at Larnaca harbor to honor Cypriots who gave aid and comfort to the 52,384 Jews in camps in eastern Cyprus.

It was the first time the Cyprus camps have been commemorated. "This visit during Jubilee year has tremendous meaning," said Keren Hayesod director general Dr. Baruch Gur.

Earlier yesterday, the delegates paid an emotional visit to the site of one group of camps at Dhekelia, which is still a British military base.

Feature, Page 17

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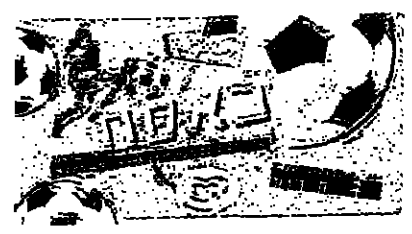
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IMA: Authorities not doing enough to protect medics

By JUDY SIEGEL

The authorities' plans for dealing with violence against medical personnel are "too little and too late," the Israel Medical Association (IMA) declared yesterday.

Meanwhile, doctors and nurses at the Pardesiya State Psychiatric Hospital in the Sharon will this morning end 24 hours of sanctions to protest against physical attacks and threats of violence. IMA chairman Dr. Yoram Blachar, in an urgent letter to Health Minister Yehoshua Matza, demanded that uniformed, armed policemen be put on duty round the clock in those facilities that are at the highest risk. There have been seven separate incidents of violence against doctors in as many weeks.

Blachar also called for consulting with security experts on ways to protect doctors in emer-

gency rooms and separate them from family members accompanying patients; in many cases, it was these relatives that resorted to violence.

In the longer term, the IMA called for a campaign to educate the public that would denounce violent acts against medical personnel and improve their image. Staffers also want courses on self-defense and how to deal with stressful situations.

Copies of the letter were also sent to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani.

Health Ministry Director-General Gabi Barabash said the ministry is "doing the best it can," and that a detailed plan being prepared by ministry security officials and the police will be ready next week. The ministry has already said that those who attack or threaten medical personnel will be arrested immediately.



All smiles

Dr. Hiyam Spadi, one of the first 10 dentists from Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, Turkey, and Cyprus, to graduate from a special six-week continuing education course in dentistry at the Hebrew University-Hadassah School of Dentistry, receives her certificate from Dr. Saker Komboz, director-general for oral and dental medicine at the PA Health Ministry, yesterday. Looking on (left) is Prof. Adam Stabholz, dean of the dental school.

(Text: Judy Siegel; Photo: Avi Hayon)

Judge overrules decision to deny baby surgery

Tel Aviv District Court yesterday overturned a juvenile court judge's decision and ordered life-saving surgery performed on an abandoned baby with a rare heart defect. Judge Savion Rotlevy criticized Judge Dalia Keren for denying a social worker's request for the surgery without even hearing testimony from the attending physicians. The baby had undergone bypass surgery and was awaiting permission for a pacemaker to be installed.

The baby was born to a Moldavian woman who left him in the hospital after learning of his birth defect and returned to her country, where she was subsequently arrested on suspicion of selling babies. She had reportedly abandoned her own baby when she realized his defect made him unmarketable.

"A sick and abandoned child, at such a critical stage in his life, even though he may not be an Israeli citizen, is nevertheless entitled to all the benefits and rights of children born here," said Rotlevy in her ruling. (Tum)

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TEL AVIV

NRP's Levy: Bibi-Barak affair closed

By LIAT COLLINS

Education Minister and National Religious Party leader Yitzhak Levy said yesterday he considered the affair surrounding the criticism by NRP MK and Deputy Religious Affairs Minister Yigal Bibi of the Supreme Court and its president, Aharon Barak, as closed.

Levy met with Barak for a pre-planned work meeting on the religious courts. Barak reportedly rejected Levy's suggestion that Bibi attend. He declined to speak to reporters about the incident. Levy also holds the Religious Affairs portfolio.

Levy said he considers Bibi's statements to be "wretched," but added they expressed a certain feeling on the part of some of the public. He earlier apologized to Barak on behalf of the whole NRP.

Levy said he would continue to work with Barak "with respect and honor and by doing our best to strengthen the judicial establishment."

Bibi was blasted by all but the haredi factions and Molelet for his comments on the interference of the High Court in the affairs of the religious courts at the end of a Knesset debate on Tuesday. Among other things, he said Barak is more involved with his policy of "judicial activism" than dealing with the problems of overloading of the courts.

On Wednesday, two MKs submitted new bills which relate to the debate on the relationship between the religious and civil court systems. Nissan Stomiansky (NRP) filed a bill which would change the composition of the panel which elects civil judges, while Moshe Gafni (United Torah Judaism) filed a bill under which decisions made in religious courts could be appealed only in the Supreme Rabbinical Court and not the Supreme Court.

Stomiansky's bill would increase the members of the panel to 12 from nine with three judges, MKs, ministers, and members of the Bar Association. Today there are three judges, but only two members of the other bodies on the committee.

His suggestion was strongly criticized by Amnon Rubinstein (Meretz), one of the MKs on the committee. He called it an attempt to "politicize" the process of selecting judges.

Neeman faults rabbis on all sides for being divisive

Lubotzky: I don't support my own conversion bill

By HANI SHAPIRO

MK Alex Lubotzky (The Third Way) admitted yesterday that even he does not support his own bill to turn the Neeman Committee proposals into law.

Lubotzky said that he had introduced the bill, together with MKs Roman Bronfman (Yisrael Ba'Aliya) and Modi Zandberg (Tsimet), in order to keep the issue of conversion from being decided by the High Court of Justice.

"I too am against the law I introduced, but I believe we must not solve [the issue of conversion] in the courts," Lubotzky told an international symposium on Israel-Diaspora Relations at Beit Hatfutsot. The event was held in memory of Abba Kovner.

MK Naomi Chazan (Meretz) told Lubotzky that it was very dangerous to propose legislation which one did not really want passed. There were others in the Knesset

who would vote for the bill, she said.

Lubotzky said that he very much opposes the separation of religion and state in Israel. He insisted that even those who said they desire such separation, do not really want to follow the pattern of the US, where religion cannot be taught in the public schools.

What most people really want, Lubotzky said, is a minimum of state interference in the lives of private citizens.

He added that he was convinced the Neeman Committee proposals would be accepted in their entirety since, he said, they express the desire of the Jewish people.

He pointed out that 80 MKs had signed a declaration supporting the proposals and that the Jewish Agency backed them, as did most Jewish organizations in the US.

The proposals also had the backing of religious Zionists and the National Religious Party favored

them, against the opinions of former Ashkenazi chief Rabbi Avraham Shapira and former Sephardi chief Rabbi Mordechai Eliahu.

It was the Reform and Conservative movements, he said, which were helping the haredi public to impose a veto on these proposals.

Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman, who headed the committee appointed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to find a solution on the issue of registering Reform and Conservative converts as Jews, said he was concerned about the danger of a rift in the Jewish people.

He warned against the growing extremism and harsh language which he said he had heard in the debates over the issue. The rabbis on all sides, he said, were only increasing the divisions instead of drawing people closer.

"There is a danger that the public

will distance itself from their spiritual leaders, Neeman said. "If leaders emphasize that which divides us instead of that which unites us, we face a great split."

Last night, UTJ Rabbi Moshe Gafni called on Netanyahu to fire Neeman for his statement.

Rabbi Uri Regev, director of the Reform movement's Israel Religious Action Center, said that the Conservative and Reform leadership could not accept the Neeman Committee proposals as long as the Chief Rabbis continue to boycott the non-Orthodox. According to the proposals, the Chief Rabbis are to supervise the conversions.

"Let there be no mistake," Regev said. "As long as the chief rabbis say they won't sit at one table with us, while they say they will sit with Sheikh Yassin, [and] as long as they say I'm a clown, we won't accept a law that says that the sole authority to determine Jewish identity is in their hands."



Terror attack exercise
A police sapper checks a 'bomb' as volunteers portray victims of a terror attack at an exercise staged near Hadassah-University Hospital in Jerusalem's Ein Kerem yesterday. (Brian Handberg)

Policeman killed, 3 hurt, in chase

A policeman was killed and three fellow officers were injured last night while pursuing a motorcyclist who had made an obscene gesture at two of them.

The incident occurred at about 1 a.m., when a motorcycle without license plates approached a patrol car posted at a roadblock near Haifa airport. The motorcyclist slowed down, gestured obscenely at the occupants, and sped off.

The driver of the patrol car, FSM Uri David, 31, gave chase. During a high-speed pursuit across the industrial area of Haifa Bay, David lost control of the patrol car as he was crossing railroad tracks and the car overturned. David was killed outright and his partner, a woman officer, suffered moderate injuries.

Meanwhile, a second patrol car that stopped to assist David and his partner was struck by a third police car, whose driver failed to notice it. (Iim)

Israeli Arab sentenced for attack on British teens

An Israeli Arab was sentenced yesterday to 20 years in prison for ramming his car into a crowd of British teenagers last year.

Bakr Abu Rabiya, of Nazareth, was convicted in Jerusalem Magistrate's Court of attempted murder for the July 1997 attack on

a group of 40 teenagers touring Old Jaffa. None of the teens was seriously hurt.

After ramming his car into the crowd, Abu Rabiya chased some of the teenagers with a sword, then stabbed a Canadian mother and daughter at a sidewalk cafe.

"During the past year, I've been dreaming about it, thinking about it every night," said Graham Kogan, 17, of Redbridge, England, who returned to Israel for the sentencing. "I can still see him trying to stab me, trying to cut me." (AP)

AT THE FESTIVAL

Jerusalem Theater
Sherover - Tribute to Nissim Aloni, Saturday, 9 p.m.
Rebecca Crown - Royal Court and Out of Joint Theaters, Blue Heart, 3 p.m. Tomorrow, Rimmon Jazz Band with singer Eli Luzon, 9 p.m.

Plaza - Tomorrow, Dallas Salutes Jerusalem, 100 voice choir from Dallas, Texas, 9 p.m.
Foyer - Tomorrow, violin and piano duo, 8:15 p.m.; Jerusalem Jazz Band, 11 p.m.

International Convention Ctr. - Cirque Eloize, 3 p.m.; tomorrow at 9 p.m.

Khan Theater - Christian Lindberg, trombone recital, 3 p.m.

Mt. Scopus amphitheater - Sunrise concert, Mediterranean music, tomorrow, 3 a.m.

Targ Center - Venus String Quartet, classical, noon; tomorrow String Quartet Plus, classical, 11 a.m.

BANK LEUMI LE-ISRAEL B.M. (Incorporated in Israel)

NOTICE TO HOLDERS OF ORDINARY STOCK

Notice is hereby given that an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Bank will be held at its Registered Office, 24 - 32 Yehuda Halevy Street, Tel Aviv, on Sunday, 21st June, 1998 at 11:30 in the morning for the purpose of electing Mr. Oded Erez as a Director from Among the Public of the Bank with effect from 4th July, 1998.

A member entitled to attend and vote may appoint a proxy or proxies to attend and vote on his or her behalf. A proxy need not be a member of the Bank.

Tel Aviv, 12th June, 1998

By Order of the Board
Jennifer Jones, Adv.
Secretary

bank leumi בנק לוי

Psagot Globe and Psagot Israel Horizons

Notice of the Reduction of the Trustee's Fee and Increase of the Fund Manager's Fee

Notice is hereby given that:

1. As from 15 June, 1998, and until otherwise decided, the rate of annual remuneration which the Trustee of the above Funds will actually receive will be 0.1% of the average annual value of the Fund's assets as computed for the purpose of determining the unit price, instead of 0.2% of that value.

It should nonetheless, be mentioned that under the respective Fund Agreements of the above Funds, the Trustee is entitled to receive a maximum annual fee at rates higher than those mentioned above, but as mentioned, unless otherwise decided, the Fund manager will receive commencing 15 June, 1998 the above fee at 0.1% of the above rate.

2. As from 15 June, 1998, and until otherwise decided, the rate of annual remuneration which the Manager of the Funds will actually receive will be 0.1% of that value, as follows:

Fund	Rate of Fund Manager's remuneration after the change (as a % of the above value)	Rate of Fund Manager's remuneration before the change (as a % of the above value)
Psagot Globe	1.60	1.50
Psagot Israel Horizons	1.90	1.80

It should nonetheless, be mentioned that under the respective Fund Agreements of the above Funds, the Fund Manager is entitled to receive a maximum annual fee at rates higher than those mentioned above, but as mentioned, unless otherwise decided, the Fund Manager will receive commencing 15 June, 1998 the fee at the rates set out above.

The Fund Manager:
Psagot Managers of Mutual Funds -
Leumi Igud Ltd.

NEWS in brief

Suspect lawyer leaves jail

Attorney Nurit Buchnik, suspected of conspiracy to commit murder and interfering with the police investigation of the attempted murder of gangland figure Roni Harari, was released on bail yesterday for two weeks of house arrest.

Police suspect that Buchnik used her role as a lawyer to pass messages to her boyfriend Yitzhak Hadif, head of the Pardess Katz gang. Hadif, who is also a suspect in the murder, had his remand extended for eight days yesterday. (Iim)

IDF settles libel suit with Dakar author

Naval Capt. (res.) Mike Eldar, the author of a book about the 1968 disappearance of the submarine *Dakar*, accepted a compromise yesterday in Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court that ended his libel suit against the IDF Spokesman.

Eldar had demanded an apology - plus NIS 100,000 in damages, which he agreed to forgo. The IDF said it had "no intent to harm Eldar" but expressed regret at what it termed his "cynical use" of the feelings of families of the missing sailors in order to sell his book, *Dakar and the Story of the Submarine Division*. (Iim)

Har-Shefi verdict due Sunday

A verdict in the trial of Margalit Har-Shefi is due in Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court on Sunday. Har-Shefi is charged with failure to prevent a crime, in that she knew Yigal Amir intended to assassinate Yitzhak Rabin and did not report it, and providing materials used in the commission of crime, in that she provided Amir with information about the armory in her home town of Beit El. (Iim)

The case of the vanishing Viagra

Knesset staffers are trying to find out just who stole some Viagra anti-impotence pills from a committee meeting this week.

Samples of the pills were brought to a meeting of the Science and Technology Committee Tuesday for a discussion on their safety. The embarrassment over the affair has been increased by the fact that the people in the room who had easiest access to the pills were either MKs or the doctors and other experts invited to give their professional opinion. (Liat Collins)

Bnei Akiva helping babies at risk

Thousands of members of the Bnei Akiva youth movement have launched a three-week campaign to raise funds for the purchase of apnea monitors for babies at risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). The monitors will be lent out by Yad Sarah (tel. 02-6444444) to parents of high-risk babies. (Judy Siegel)

TIROCHE
AUCTION NO. 66
managing directors: Orna & Dov Hazan

ISRAELI & INTERNATIONAL ART

SATURDAY 20.6.98
PART I - AT 18.00
PART II - AT 20.30

Reuven Rubin, watercolor, 45 X 32 cm. **VIEWING:**

MONDAY-THURSDAY	15-18.6.98	11.00-22.00
FRIDAY	19.6.98	11.00-15.00
SATURDAY (day of auction)	20.6.98	11.00-14.00

Tiroche Auction House, Kikar de Shalit, Herzlia Pituach 46755.
Tel. 09-9509893/4, Fax. 09-9509895

FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG
The Yitzhak Rabin For Israel Studies

The Jubilee Year: BETWEEN MASADA AND GOA
Israeli Youth Attitudes Toward Personal, Social and National Issues

15:30-16:00 Registration
Greetings Dr. Winfried Veit,
Director, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Israel
Opening Address: Prof. Anita Shapira,
Head, Yitzhak Rabin Center for Israel Studies

16:00-16:20 Presentation of Research Findings of the Israeli Institute for Economic & Social Research
Chair: Dr. Roby Nathanson,
Editor of the Research, The Israeli Institute for Economic and Social Research
Prof. Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar, Tel Aviv University
Prof. Nehemia Friedland, Tel Aviv University
Dr. Irit Keyman, The Yitzhak Rabin Center for Israel Studies
Dr. Natan Szmaier, The Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yaffo
Respondent: The Poet Haim Guri

18:00-18:30 Break and Refreshments
18:30-18:50 Major General Matan Vilnai
18:50 Round Table Discussion:
Is it "Worthy to Die for One's Country?"
Moderator: Nativ Robinson

The event will take place on Wednesday, June 17, 1998
at the Arison Music Conservatory,
19 Stricker St., Tel Aviv
Open to the Public
R.S.V.P. Tel: 03-6488676, Fax: 03-6488677

Russia invites Milosevic to visit

By OLEG SYCHEDOV

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russian President Boris Yeltsin stepped into the Kosovo conflict yesterday by inviting Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic to Moscow to discuss the growing tension in Serbia's separatist region.

Yeltsin suggested the visit by telephone, a Kremlin spokesman said, and Milosevic - under mounting international pressure to halt a bloody Kosovo crackdown against Albanian separatists - will be in town on Monday and Tuesday.

Earlier, Yeltsin discussed Kosovo with Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov. The Kremlin spokesman could not say whether the invitation to Milosevic, whose country is a traditional Orthodox ally of Russia, had been agreed during this telephone conversation.

Primakov was due to fly to London later yesterday for a Group of Eight ministerial meeting.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said Kosovo was likely to be discussed at the meeting of the G8, which comprises Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the US.

Earlier this week, Yeltsin said during a visit to Germany that he could meet Milosevic to discuss the crisis. British Prime Minister Tony Blair last weekend urged Yeltsin to intervene.

Serbia's crackdown on the ethnic Albanian majority in its southern province has drawn accusations of Bosnia-style "ethnic cleansing" and stirred fears of another Balkan conflict.

Russia has joined the chorus of world leaders expressing growing impatience with the conflict, which erupted at the end of February with a Serbian police assault on strongholds of ethnic Albanian separatist guerrillas.

Senior diplomats of the Contact Group on former Yugoslavia - the US, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Russia - met in Paris on Wednesday and proposed giving Milosevic a deadline to end violence in Kosovo or face measures that may include military action.

NATO defense ministers, meeting in Brussels yesterday, announced air exercises in Macedonia and Albania, which border Kosovo and have been flooded with ethnic Albanian refugees fleeing the province.

Russia has strongly objected to launching any NATO operation in Kosovo or outside the rebel province without authorization by Yugoslavia and the UN Security Council, where Moscow enjoys a right to veto decisions.

But Primakov indicated in a newspaper interview last month that Russia could give support in the Security Council to a NATO operation in Albania and Macedonia, if the situation demanded.

The Itar-Tass news agency quoted Foreign Ministry spokesman Vladimir Rakhmanin as saying Moscow favors focusing international efforts on encouraging talks between Belgrade and Kosovo separatists and views the use of force as a final and undesirable option.

Rakhmanin said Russia is taking part in discussing the planned operations in Albania, which he described as a part of NATO's Partnership for Peace initiative.

"Our position is that precise time limits for possible Partnership for Peace operation exercises are needed as well as a script which would not provoke the sides to step up [confrontation]," he said. "We believe that all other potential NATO operations beyond the zone of the alliance's responsibility should be carried out only after their approval by the UN Security Council."

In attempt to warn Yugoslavia on Kosovo

By SUSANNE M. SCHAFER

BRUSSELS (AP) - NATO will mount simulated air raids and bombing runs over Albania and Macedonia in the next few days, flexing its military muscle to warn Yugoslavia against attacking ethnic Albanians in the separatist province of Kosovo.

Alliance defense ministers yesterday authorized the air-power exercise, which could launch NATO planes from French, British, or US aircraft carriers in the Adriatic. Nearby air bases, such as Aviano Air Base in Italy, could also be used in the effort.

"The message is clear and unambiguous to Belgrade - think again," said British Defense Secretary George Robertson. "What we are talking about here is diplomacy backed by the threat of force."

The NATO ministers expressed "disgust and revulsion at the increased levels of violence and repression" ordered by Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, Robertson said, adding, "President Milosevic must think again. He must change his tactics."

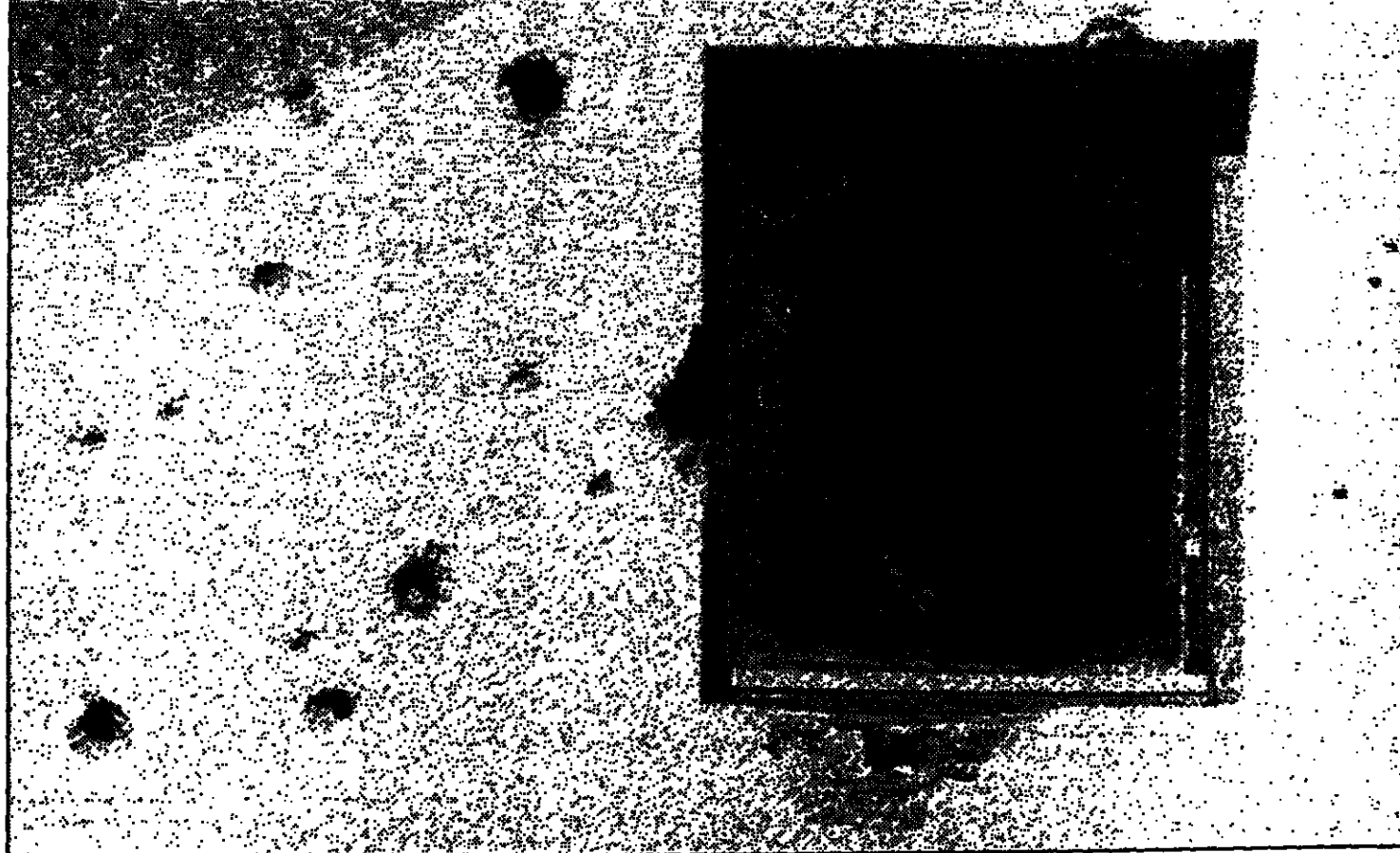
"At the end of the day... there are options where the military might of NATO may well be used against him," Robertson said, adding the Yugoslav leader "would be rash and foolish if he would ignore the message coming from NATO."

The exercise of allied military might recalls NATO's air strikes over Bosnia several years ago - its first military action ever - which helped bring about the Dayton peace accords.

Alliance officials said they hoped the exercise would have the same effect, without leading to actual strikes.

NATO has about 150 planes from 10 nations in the region in support of the Bosnia operation, which could be put to use in the exercise. The aircraft carrier USS Eisenhower has departed Norfolk, Virginia, and could be in the Mediterranean within a week.

The NATO ministers issued a statement saying they intended to



A pigeon gazes from the window of a bullet-riddled house in Decani, Kosovo, this week after recent fighting there between ethnic Albanians and Serb police. Thousands of ethnic Albanians have fled into neighboring Albania. (AP)

seek Albania's and Macedonia's approval "to conduct an appropriate air exercise in these two countries as quickly as possible, with the aim of demonstrating NATO's ability to project power rapidly into the region."

A US defense official said the exercise will be carried out in the next few days and could include simulated rocket attacks by helicopters and bombing raids by planes.

German Defense Minister Volker Ruehe, in remarks to his 15 fellow NATO defense ministers meeting here, said such action, in line with recommendations from NATO ambassadors, "would serve

as a serious warning to Belgrade."

The ministers also instructed NATO military planners to look into direct military action in Kosovo, with "particular consideration to air strikes against selected targets and the employment of air and/or ground forces if necessary to enforce a settlement for Kosovo, as a last resort," Ruehe said.

According to the NATO statement, the exercise is designed to convince Milosevic to order a cease-fire, withdraw army forces, halt the repression of the majority ethnic Albanians in the Serbian province, and enter serious negotiations with separatists to end the

conflict.

"We are focusing on the use of air power to achieve those objectives," a NATO official said. "We don't want to use force unless we absolutely have to."

The Kosovo Liberation Army, which has been battling Yugoslav forces for independence, must also cease its armed struggle, NATO said. The allies do not support its drive for independence.

US Defense Secretary William Cohen met privately with NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana before he and NATO colleagues agreed on the exercise.

Speaking in Rome prior to flying to Brussels, Cohen said he hoped

the West would not have to resort to military action, but he left the option open.

"It is important to end this scandal of the bombing and shelling of innocent people. We will work to achieve that at every level - diplomatic, economic and hopefully not military - but we're not ruling it out either," Cohen said at a news conference with Italian Defense Minister Beniamino Andreatta.

The NATO air action involving several nations will be conducted under the command of Adm. Joseph Lopez, the Naples-based American officer who heads NATO's Southern Command, a senior US official said.

Due to pro-Armenian bill:

Turkey freezes \$145m. arms deal with France

ANKARA (Reuters) - Turkey yesterday confirmed it had suspended the signing of a \$145 million accord to buy Eryx missiles from Aerospatiale in a row with France over the deaths of Armenians in World War I.

"There is a postponement regarding these anti-tank missiles," Foreign Ministry spokesman Necati Utkan told a news briefing.

Turkey was upset last month when the French National Assembly adopted a bill stating: "France publicly recognizes the

Armenian genocide of 1915." The bill is due to be discussed this month in the Senate, the upper house of the French parliament.

Armenians say Turks killed 1.5 million of their compatriots in the war. Ankara rejects the genocide charge and says thousands of Turks and Armenians died in fighting in 1915 on land that is now eastern Turkey.

A French diplomat told Reuters on Wednesday that Turkey had postponed the signing of the agreement for the shoulder-launched, anti-tank system last week.

Ethiopia accuses Eritrea of new attack

By TSEGAYE TADESSE

ADDIS ABABA (Reuters) - Ethiopia said yesterday that Eritrea had launched a new attack at the eastern end of their border, close to the Red Sea port of Assab.

Ethiopian government spokeswoman Selome Tadesse said Eritrean forces had attacked Ethiopian positions early yesterday morning, but that further details were not immediately available.

There was no confirmation of the Assab fighting from Eritrea, but if correct it marks a significant development in the border conflict that erupted on May 6.

Until hostilities began, Assab, one of Eritrea's two main ports, was heavily used

by Ethiopia to import and export supplies.

The border is around 70 km from the Red Sea and has been landlocked Ethiopia's closest point to the sea since Eritrea achieved independence in 1993.

Assab has an oil refinery and fuel storage depot, but diplomats said the refinery was closed several months ago.

Tadesse said that fighting continued yesterday around Badme and Sheraro on the western border between the two Horn of Africa neighbors.

On Wednesday Ethiopia said it had inflicted heavy losses on attacking Eritrean forces in the area, which lies at the heart of the conflict. Eritrea also reported fighting.

"A large segment of Eritrean troops which

launched an attack on Ethiopia's position at Badme front has been destroyed," Tadesse said.

Known as Badme or Badame, the area is a rocky 400 square km triangle of land claimed by both sides along the western border. Some areas on the Assab front are also in dispute. Neither side has announced exact casualty figures from the five-week-old fighting.

The first clash was on May 6, but the risk of full-blown conflict soared with two days of air strikes on June 5 and 6 and land battles this week.

There was heavy fighting on Tuesday around Zalambessa on the main road between the two country's capitals. Addis

Ababa is 550 km to the south and the Eritrean capital Asmara is 100 km to the north.

Diplomatic efforts to solve the conflict have so far failed. Eritrean President Isayas Afewerki asked Egypt on Wednesday to help mediate in the conflict in a letter handed by emissaries to President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo. Ethiopia said, however, it is unaware of Eritrea's request for Egyptian mediation.

"We welcome any friends who are trying to solve this. But Ethiopia's position is that a proliferation of mediators is not going to work," she said, adding that Ethiopia believed a US-Rwanda peace plan remains the basis for mediation.

US college team invited to N. Korea

WATERBURY, Connecticut (AP) - The Teikyo Post men's basketball team is planning a historic trip this summer, becoming the first US sports delegation to visit North Korea.

The school announced Tuesday it has accepted the invitation from Intersport USA Inc., a non-profit sports exchange program.

The 11-day trip begins August 1 and includes a stop in China before heading to the North Korean capital of Pyongyang.

"Teikyo Post University is the ideal institution to undertake this endeavor because of the international

flavor we have," head coach Tom Curie said.

The Waterbury school is affiliated with Teikyo University in Japan. The basketball team is a member of the NAIA and the Collegiate Athletic Association.

The Rev. Philip Cascia, president and founder of Connecticut-based Intersport, said the program visits countries that, historically, have had strained relations with the US.

Since 1988, Intersport has taken athletes to goodwill tournaments in the former Soviet Union, China, Vietnam, and Cuba and has plans to visit Iran.

AFFAIRS

Continued from Page 1

The mainstream, secular, Israeli Jewish wedding - leaving aside the religious and Arab weddings, which are quite different stories - is a pretty faceless, commercialized affair.

In any society, weddings tend to be alike, yet each one has the potential to be unique - as unique as the personalities of the two people at its center. But that's only if the rabbi, the parents, the friends, or the couple themselves mention something about who these two people are. At Israeli weddings, nobody stands up to say anything about the man and woman whose special day it's supposed to be.

You could be at the wedding of Orit and Tomer, or of Galia and Amnon and you wouldn't know the difference. An Israeli wedding is like a dinner-dance, except there's this one couple that's dressed a little fancier than everyone else.

"Most weddings here are all dolled-up, trivial, stereotyped. I want mine to be different," said Oren, 23, who's about to start a program in special education at Ben-Gurion University. Asked if he'd like his close friends and family to say something personal about him and his bride on that day, Oren replied: "That might be very nice, as long as it's from the heart. But the truth is I've never seen such a thing."

The modern Israeli wedding is notorious for its shiny, spangled,

garish quality, with the DJ's flashing lights and thumping loudspeakers; the bride's technicolor makeup and swirling, cascading hairdo; the sparklers, the fireworks, etc. But there's good news on the style front - some of the worst excesses are gone.

"The couple making a grand entrance by landing in a helicopter on the roof of the hall - that's history. It went out a few years ago. Same with the red carpet and the throne for the bride," said Doron Levy, sales manager for Tel Aviv's upscale Beit Recital hall. "Now the couple greets the guests as they come in."

Israelis still go for gimmicks in a big way, they just want them "classier" - more exotic and expensive.

"One of the new things is that the hors d'oeuvres are supposed to make people go, 'Wow!'" Levy said. "You might have a Chinese chef stir-frying in a wok, or a barman wearing a Mexican sombrero passing out shots of tequila."

"The music could be a chamber quartet dressed baroque style in wigs and breeches, or a troupe of half-naked dancers and drummers playing South American music and leading the guests from the huppa onto the dance floor," Levy continued. "There's no end to the gimmicks."

One of the most significant changes on the Israeli wedding scene in the last decade is that the parents no longer plan them; the bride and groom do.

"It used to be a sign of respect to

let the parents choose everything. Now the young people say, 'Abba, you don't understand, let me decide,'" said Shmuel "Chico" Kishales, manager of Ramle's low-middle-scale Hanelech Shlomo hall.

"It just shows how young people in Israel are so much more independent than before," added Orna Elbaz, manager of Dragee Events and Productions, a Ramat Gan booking house for catered affairs.

Asked if there is a difference between Sephardi and Ashkenazi weddings, Elbaz replied, "A Sephardi wedding is much happier, excuse me for saying. It's like a gathering of the clan. The music is livelier, the food is spicier, the feeling is warmer. The Ashkenazim don't have as good a time. They'll have classical music, and a lot less food."

"But the Ashkenazim are a lot smarter. A Sephardi will go deep into debt to put on a big wedding, while the Ashkenazim think more about the economics of it. My in-laws are Ashkenazim and when they're planning a wedding, they'll say, 'We want to have this, and this, but we also want to come out all right economically.' And they're right."

Ah, the economics of the Israeli wedding. Said one banquet hall staffer, "For the families putting on the wedding, it's a business in every way, except they don't have to pay income tax."

(First of a four-part series. On Sunday: Running a wedding like a business.)

חַסְדֵי מֶלֶךְ
The unveiling of the tombstone of our beloved dear father
Chazan CHAIM MOSKOVITZ
BR Mordechai Halevi ז"ל
Chazan of Golders Green Beit Hamidrash, London.
Will take place בְּיָדֵינוּ on Tuesday, June 16, 1998 (22 Sivan 5758)
at 6 p.m. at Har Tamir, Givat Shaul, Jerusalem.
The Family

CONGREGATION MORESHET AVRAHAM - East Talpott
AAOI - Jerusalem Region and Hadassah - Israel
are co-sponsoring a
MEMORIAL TRIBUTE
in memory of
RUTH BORNSTEIN ז"ל
née Haza
on Wednesday, June 24, at 8 p.m. at AAOI, 6 Mane St., Jerusalem
Contributions: Ruth Bornstein Memorial Fund, P.O.B. 29072, Jer. 93801.
The fund will be used to continue her works of *gmilat hassadim*.
For more details, call 02-672 0322, 052-636 345.

To Liz Trakenisk (Bennett)
Our thoughts are with you and your family, on the passing of your mother
ANITA BENNETT
in London
From all of us at ESRA

The matzeva for the late beloved
GERALD KREDITOR ז"ל
will be consecrated on Har Hazeitum
(Agudat Achim Anshei America)
on June 16 (22 Sivan 5758) at 5:30 p.m.
The Kreditor Families
London and Jerusalem

On the 16th yahrzeit of
SHLOMO AUMANN ז"ל
we will visit his grave on Mt. Herzl, Jerusalem,
on Monday, June 15, 1998 (21 Sivan 5758)
meeting at 8:30 p.m. at the cemetery entrance.
At 8:15 p.m., a study session, led by Rabbi Yakov Meidan, will
be held at the Lehman home, 26a Rahel Imenu, (cor. Tel Hai).
The Family

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MEMO
June 12, 1998

To: George Warszawski
Director, International Funds Division

From: David Zwebner, President

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As market pressures persist

Russia to expand sell-offs, foreign borrowing

By MARTIN NESIRKY

MOSCOW (Reuters) — Russia tried to squeeze an extra trickle of cash into its parched economy yesterday by increasing foreign borrowing plans and announcing new schemes to sell off state firms to help tackle a resurgent financial crisis.

As Russian shares fell again, the ruble languished and yields on long-term government securities soared, the government met to approve a list of measures to reduce a budget deficit smashed wide open by poor tax collection, wage debts and low oil prices.

"I wouldn't be surprised to see the market down six plus percent today," Martin Diggel of Brunswick brokerage in Moscow said. "We've gone past desperate. People are resigned now."

President Boris Yeltsin — whose political reputation and place in the history books depend on keeping reforms on track and Russia stable — was monitoring domestic and world events from the Kremlin, his press office said.

In Paris, French Finance Minister Dominique Strauss-Kahn provided little cheer for gloomy Russian markets which have been waiting, so far in vain, for evidence of additional cash to prop up government finances and the ruble.

He told reporters Moscow had not asked any country from the Group of Seven industrial nations for international aid.

London's Financial Times newspaper gave a clue why this could be the case, at least in the short term.

It quoted bankers as saying Russia had borrowed at least \$200 million from Western commercial banks in the past week to ease pressure on borrowing through the domestic debt market.

Finance Minister Mikhail Zadornov did not refer to this in comments to Russian news agencies, but he did say Prime Minister Sergei Kiriyenko's government had decided at its weekly cabinet meeting yesterday to increase its 1998 Eurobond issues to \$6 billion from \$3.4 billion.

"A higher ceiling will allow us to maneuver in the current difficult situation on the Russian financial markets," Itar-Tass news agency quoted Zadornov as saying.

Underscoring the precarious state of the markets, the benchmark RTS share index was down 5.35% to 174.41 by mid-day on fears about Asian currency wobbles as well as persistent Russian woes.

Yields on one-year treasury bills, known by their Russian acronym GKO, and on longer-term OFZ bonds soared to 58-62% from 50-52% at the previous session. The ruble stood at 6.21 to the dollar, slightly weaker than on Wednesday and just outside the central bank's trading band for the day.

"There is no optimism in the market," said Konstantin Svyatny at Rossiyskiy Kredit bank.

In an attempt to boost confidence and ease cash out from under Russian mattresses, a min-

ister said the government may unfreeze a 5% stake in Russian natural gas monopoly Gazprom and auction a remaining quarter stake in state oil company Rosneft to ordinary citizens.

First Deputy Property Minister Alexander Braverman also told a news conference an international roadshow for the sale of a 75% stake in Rosneft, the last big oil firm in state hands, would start in Britain and the United States on Friday.

A previous Rosneft auction failed to attract bidders — a blow to the embattled government, which had already written the expected \$2 billion proceeds into the 1998 budget.

The confluence of such factors has made it all the harder to pay wage arrears to public sector workers such as coal miners, who blocked railway lines last month to demand their pay.

Yesterday, miners demonstrated in Moscow as union leaders and officials were outlining to what extent the government had kept its promise to cough up. Other energy sector workers are also considering a strike.

In the opposition-dominated State Duma lower house of parliament, deputies voted to launch an attempt to rule out any lingering chance of Yeltsin running for the presidency again.

The aim is to close a perceived loophole which theoretically allows a president to run for a third term but not to do the job if he wins. Yeltsin has sent mixed signals on his intentions for the next presidential election in 2000.



Miners from Siberia protest in Moscow yesterday against the government's failure to pay months of overdue wages. A slogan carried by the workers reads: "Answer us, Boris [Yeltsin], why are we dying for free in the mines."

(AP)

Nigerian leader edges toward showdown with opposition

By MATTHEW TOSTEVIN

LAGOS (Reuters) — Nigeria's new military ruler, General Abdulsalam Abubakar, yesterday edged closer to a showdown with opposition groups calling for protests against his three-day-old regime.

Political uncertainty weighed heavily on the oil-producing West African country after Abubakar prepared to follow the discredited democracy plan of late dictator Sani Abacha and gave no sign of appeasing opposition anger.

But local financial markets gave a cautious thumbs-up to

Abubakar. The naira currency strengthened more than two percent as hopes that the 55-year-old general would fulfill his promise to quit in October stemmed capital flight.

The naira traded on the open market at 87.80/88.80 to the dollar against Wednesday's 91.50/92.50.

Children in the biggest city, Lagos, were sent home by their teachers for an early weekend after security forces warned would-be protesters to call off demonstrations planned for today.

"We don't want innocent students to be caught up so we asked

them to go home," an education official in the city of eight million said.

Many of the army top brass traveled to Abacha's home city of Kano for Moslem prayers to mark the third day since his death.

So far, Western countries, which were exasperated by Abacha's failure to establish democracy or free scores of political prisoners, have given the new ruler the benefit of the doubt.

Abacha was the sole candidate in elections he decreed for August 1.

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has offered

UN assistance to Abubakar to restore democracy.

But opposition groups, concentrated in southern Nigeria, are unconvinced by military pledges to give up the reins of power by October 1, pointing to past broken promises by a succession of army strongmen.

Abacha always dealt ruthlessly with dissenters, locking up scores of people and ordering troops to put down protests with force.

Abubakar faces his first challenge today, when activists have called street protests to mark the fifth anniversary of 1993 elections. The annulment of those

polls lies at the root of Nigeria's continuing political crisis.

"The action shall be a mark of concrete rejection of the continuation of military rule," a statement from the main opposition United Action for Democracy group said in Lagos. "The current Abubakar concoction is clearly unacceptable." But the police have vowed not to allow the planned protests, which they described as illegal.

"We have warned that rallies are unlawful... people should not embark on rallies unless they have a police permit. They must not slap the law," police spokesman Young Adebamtehin told reporters.

'TV Guide' sold for \$2b.

NEW YORK (Reuters) — Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. Ltd. has agreed to sell its TV Guide properties to United Video Satellite Group Inc. for \$2 billion in cash and stock, giving it a 40 percent stake in United Video, the companies said yesterday.

The deal will combine TV Guide, the nation's best-selling weekly magazine with a circulation of 13 million, with the electronically delivered TV listings provided to 50 million American homes and another 3 million homes outside the United States by United Video's satellite system.

News Corp. will receive \$800

million cash and 30 million shares of United Video, valued at \$1.2 billion.

TV Guide properties includes the magazine, the TVGEN entertainment web site and TVSM, a cable guide publisher that News Corp. has agreed to acquire.

After the deal, 40% of United Video will be held by News Corp., 44% by a venture that includes TCI Ventures Group and Liberty Media Corp., and 16% by public shareholders.

United Video, which operates the television listings guide called Prevue Networks, said it plans to rename some its products using the TV Guide brand name.

Can Russians, Chinese get perked up for coffee?

By DUDLEY WHITE

BEIJING (Bloomberg) — Jiang Tao, a 24-year-old Beijing sales manager, still remembers his first cup of coffee.

"It tasted bad," he says. "I prefer tea." Jiang's preference isn't unusual in China, where tea has been king for 4,000 years. The average adult there drinks one cup of coffee a year, compared with 511 cups in the US and 700 cups in frigid Finland.

For the world's biggest coffee-growing countries and coffee-selling companies, that smells like opportunity brewing.

So they are teaming up in an unprecedented effort to get the Chinese, along with their 131 cup-a-year Russian neighbors, to wake up and smell the coffee.

"These are two huge countries with per-capita consumption far less than their potential," says Inna Novikova, group product manager for Nestle Russia, a unit of Nestle SA.

Companies such as Nestle and Philip Morris Cos. Kraft unit hope Chinese and Russian consumers will rescue them from a troubling trend: coffee drinking in the US and Europe, which account for half of global consumption, is falling. It has dropped an average of 1.4 percent a year since 1993, as con-

sumers turned to other beverages like herbal teas and branded juice drinks.

Coffee-growing countries such as Colombia and Papua New Guinea have a different worry. Their overproduction is likely to create a glut of coffee in a few years and drive down prices unless somebody starts drinking a lot more coffee.

The promotional campaign, which started in April, is coordinated by the International Coffee Organization, which represents the governments of most of the world's largest producers, and is funded by companies and growers. The ICO won't reveal the budget, but analysts say it's probably less than \$10 million.

Growers in Colombia, where coffee is the second-largest source of export revenue, have contributed \$1 million. So far, most of the spending has been on celebrity endorsements, television advertisements and coffee festivals aimed at getting people to try coffee for the first time.

Hold the double-skinny decaf latte, though. Before pitching any exotic coffee drinks that might befuddle tea-loving Chinese and Russians, the coffee companies and growers figure they should take aim at tea with something easy to prepare like instant coffee.

"The preparation of a cup of

instant coffee is very close to that of a cup of tea," Novikova says. "Russia is traditionally a tea culture and so is China. It's about a longer-term perspective of growing and developing consumption in the two countries."

Growers and companies acknowledge that it will take more than a few million bucks to overcome several millennia of tea-drinking culture. No one expects miracles.

"China can be a good market but it will take time," said Ricardo Gutierrez, the representative of the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia in Asia. "China's market could be growing at 5% to 10% a year but we have to see how the younger people's tea-drinking habits will change with time."

Import duties are one obstacle. Russia charges a 5% duty on imports of raw coffee beans and 10% on roasted beans. In China, where the duty is meant to protect domestic coffee producers in the south, unprocessed coffee imports are hit with a 20% duty and jars of instant coffee get a duty of 40%.

To the Chinese consumer, that makes a 100 gram jar of Nescafe Gold Blend about three times more expensive than 50 grams of tea which lasts about the same time.

Coffee growers are in a predicament not unlike the oil producers of the world. They will soon be producing too much coffee. Last month, the industry's leading trade group, taking a cue from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, made cuts to export quotas in an attempt to boost prices.

A bumper harvest in Brazil, the world's largest coffee producer, could mean coffee production this year exceeds demand for the first time since 1992, said Ross Prior, an analyst at ABN Amro Chicago Corp. (UK) Ltd.

Paulo Moeller, president of Swiss coffee trading firm Volcafe Ltd. expects supplies of beans will reach 111 million 60-kilo bags by 2003, 8.8% more than the 102 million bags he expects to be consumed that year.

That means that unless consumers in Russia and China start taking a liking to coffee soon, coffee growers in countries like Papua New Guinea — where 50 percent households derive all or part of their income from coffee — could soon be confronted with a huge oversupply and falling prices.

"We've got a lot of markets in Europe and North America that are saturated with coffee," said Mick Wheeler, a U.K.-based representative of the Papua New Guinea Coffee Industry Corporation Ltd.

"We could be faced with a huge surplus." The growers and companies can take heart in the example of Japan, where coffee consumption has been steadily rising with increasing Western influence.

Japanese coffee consumption rose from "virtually nothing" in 1950 to about 6 million bags last year, said Kerry Muir, an independent U.K.-based coffee analyst. "Generic promotion is very useful if it is followed up by the roasters," Muir said. "If they've already got Nestle and Kraft involved then they're already halfway there."

Consumers in China and Russia had a hard time getting certain Western goods such as coffee until this decade — coffee wasn't accessible to most Russians until prices were liberalized in 1992.

Now that both countries, with a combined population of about 1.35 billion, are accepting more Western goods, companies such as Kraft and Nestle hope they can imitate the success of brands like Coca-Cola, which increased Chinese sales by 26 percent last year.

"If you look at countries like China and Russia, there are large numbers of consumers that presently aren't drinking any coffee," said Michael Heath, promotions manager at the ICO. "For the producing countries, the benefit is there for the long run."

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Critical restraint

This week's outburst by Deputy Minister of Religious Affairs Yigal Bibi against the Supreme Court has been met by a withering barrage of condemnation. Of these responses, that of Yisrael Ba'aliya MK Roman Brodman was perhaps the most telling. Bibi's comments, he said, "were the words of street-bully, leaving a stain on the national-religious public."

It is Jewish law and tradition, after all, that recognizes the potential destructive power of speech, even comparing the blemishing of another's good name to the crime of murder. Speaking at the Knesset podium as a respondent for the government, Bibi said, "The time has come to say that the emperor is naked. There is no law, there is no justice. People don't go to court, because they know there is no justice there, and that is what should interest Justice [Aharon] Barak."

In addition, the deputy minister repeated the familiar accusation of judicial activism, saying, "Justice Barak must decide if he is a Supreme Court justice or a supreme legislator." Finally, he threatened that the Knesset might have to respond to such activism with "a law requiring the Supreme Court to judge according to the law" and with "[changing] the manner of selecting judges."

Unfortunately, Bibi did not make his comments out of the blue, but upon a background of escalating attacks by religious politicians against the legitimacy of the courts. So far it has been the Shas Party that has made such attacks a staple of its politics; the added voice of the NRP's Bibi is a worrisome expansion of this phenomenon. NRP ministers Yitzhak Levy and Shaul Yahalom both distanced themselves from Bibi's statements, but so far have not demanded a public apology.

It is, of course, possible to make a legitimate critique of the courts, just as it is acceptable to criticize other branches of government. What is unacceptable about these attacks is the combination of their official context, their personal nature against Justice Barak, and their blanket rejection of the legitimacy of the judicial system. As Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein put it, "The outcome is that the man in the street who appears before the court could certainly think that if such important people, and others, say such things, maybe the system really doesn't operate fairly."

Ironically, the roots of the deputy minister's primary charge against the Supreme Court—that it is legislating rather than judging—could just as easily be laid at the doorstep of the Knesset. Though Israel has no constitution, the court and the Knesset have over time worked together to create a body of laws that act like a constitution. It is the Knesset that effectively led

the "constitutional revolution" by passing broad new Basic Laws, most recently Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty and Basic Law: Freedom of Occupation. By adding to the stock of laws that are "basic" and take precedence over other laws, the Knesset gave the court sweeping powers to overturn legislation.

This revolution has been hailed by Justice Barak, but it was really former Supreme Court president Shimon Agranat who established key precedents whereby fundamental rights, such as freedom of speech, can be derived from Basic Laws and called upon to block or overturn Knesset legislation. Barak is correct that the court has the right and responsibility to strike down laws that violate Basic Laws, even if this is construed as "political." As Barak somewhat crassly put it, "Those who argue that we should not hand down rulings on issues with political implications don't understand what a court is." What is not clear is why, in the same recent speech at a ceremony welcoming new judges, Barak would seem to categorically deny the Knesset's right to legislatively overturn court decisions. "A High Court-bypass law," Barak declared, "is nothing but a democracy-bypass law." There may be cases where the court rules on rights derived from Basic Laws, but the Knesset also has every right to pass legislation that reverses an interpretation of the court.

Such imperiousness on Barak's part is uncalled for, and unnecessarily adds grist to his critics' mill. Perhaps more to the point, the court should take seriously the discontent among parts of the religious public, even if it is being grossly expressed and exploited by religious politicians. The legitimate religious concern is not a question of bias against religious individuals, but that the court does not sufficiently draw upon religious tradition in its rulings.

According to the Fundamentals of Jurisprudence Law (1980), Jewish law is one of the sources that should guide Israeli jurisprudence. This does not mean just drawing a quote from the Talmud when convenient, but issuing rulings that consider the body of Jewish law as it does other precedents under American or British law. The sense that Jewish law has been relegated to the religious court system, leaving an almost purely "secular" court as its opposite, should be rectified.

Whatever shortcomings do exist in our judicial system, the way to deal with them is not with blanket broadsides, or personal attacks. The physical threats against judges have already reached a worrisome level of late, and there is no excuse for adding to such a charged atmosphere. Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi is correct that Bibi should either apologize for his remarks or resign.

No Islamic bomb – yet

GERALD M. STEINBERG

Immediately after India suddenly shattered its 24-year moratorium and detonated a series of nuclear tests, it was clear that Pakistan would follow. This led to a series of screaming headlines in the Israeli press warning of the dangers of an "Islamic bomb."

Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi's visit to Islamabad a few days after Pakistan joined the nuclear club seemed to emphasize these threats.

However, this focus is magnified far out of proportion. Neither the term "Islamic bomb," nor the Pakistani capability itself are fundamentally new.

The term was coined in the

owe this dubious achievement primarily to the assistance received from China. If anything, this weapon should be labeled as a "Chinese bomb."

Nevertheless, immediately following the Pakistani tests, the Arab world and the Palestinians, in particular, celebrated what they viewed as the birth of the "Islamic bomb." At Al Aksa Mosque, worshippers were ecstatic when Sheikh Hayyan Idrisi declared that "the Pakistani nuclear bomb is the beginning of the resurgence of Islamic power." Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin celebrated the new "asset to Arab and Moslem nations."

It would be naive to argue that the recent events in South Asia will not have a longer-term impact on the Middle East or on Israel

1970s, when then-president Ali Bhutto declared that despite sanctions, Pakistan would follow India in developing nuclear weapons, even if his people "had to eat grass."

Pakistan received aid from a number of countries in the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia and Libya, leading to concerns that Pakistani nuclear know-how, or even weapons, would be transferred to Muammar Gaddafi, the Saudis, or Saddam Hussein.

In the intervening 20 years, there has been no sign of an "Islamic bomb" in this sense. Although Pakistan is believed to have had a nuclear weapons capability since the mid-1980s, no evidence has surfaced of aid or technology transfer. With the recent tests, Pakistan became an unambiguous nuclear power, but this does not necessarily imply that Pakistan will now become a source of nuclear weapons or technology.

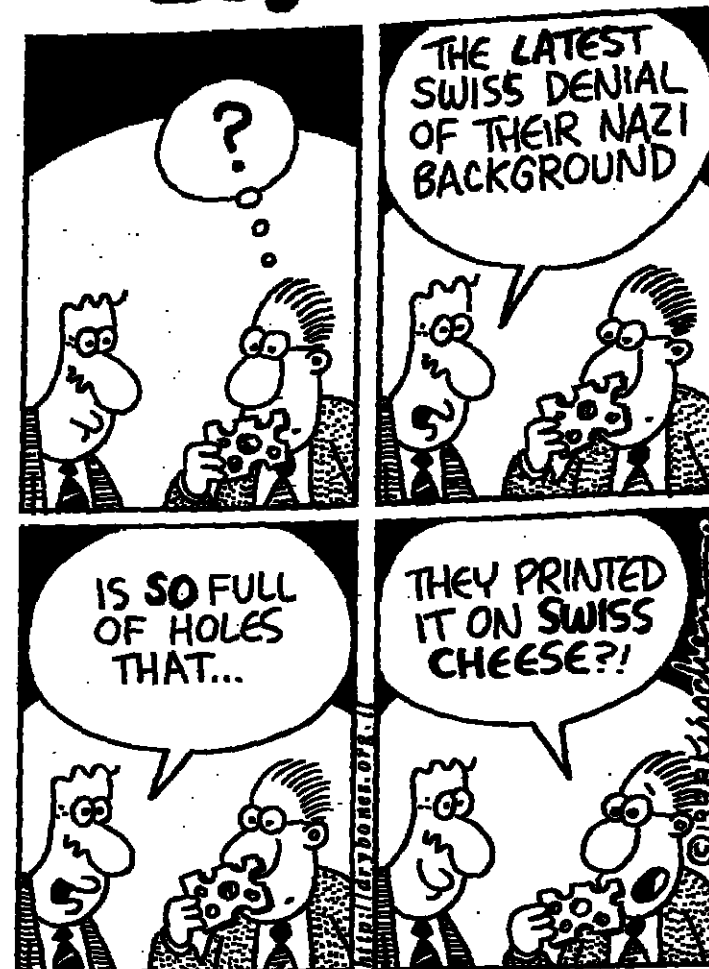
Indeed, it is clear that these tests were a response to India's decision to take the "Hindu bomb" out of the basement. Pakistan is focused on what it perceives as the Indian threat and the conflict over Kashmir, and has no interest in becoming embroiled in the Middle East. Furthermore, far from being an Islamic bomb, the Pakistanis

Newspapers printed cartoons featuring a mushroom cloud topped by an Islamic crescent, and some argued that the display of Islamic power would force Israel to make more concessions in negotiations with Yasser Arafat. In a few days, this euphoria disappeared, as the Palestinians understood that there is no link between the South Asian tests and the Middle East.

AT THE SAME time, it would be naive to argue that the recent events will not have a longer-term impact on the Middle East or on Israel. The sudden disruption of decades of nuclear equilibrium, when no state entered the nuclear club, is in itself, a source of instability, Israel is a status-quo state, and despite the near-misses in the cases of Iraq and North Korea, and Iran's current efforts, the nuclear non-proliferation regime has served its interests.

Now, the future of this regime is uncertain, at best. A world of seven nuclear powers is fundamentally different from the system of five powers, and the seven may become 10, and then 15, etc. In most scenarios, the next states in the queue are Iran and Iraq (which still has its nuclear design teams). Both Iran and Iraq were well on

Dry Bones



the road towards nuclear weapons long before India and Pakistan joined the nuclear club. Both countries have been receiving nuclear and missile technology from China and Russia. Thus, even if it were so inclined, the ability of Pakistan to assist Iran or Iraq beyond what has been received directly from Moscow and Beijing is probably minimal.

(Perhaps some information on bomb design, based on the recent tests, can be provided, but over 50 years after Hiroshima, this is of marginal importance.)

In addition, relations between Iran and Pakistan are not particularly close despite Kharrazi's visit, and Pakistan is unlikely to risk its close relationship with Saudi Arabia by helping Iran or Iraq go nuclear. This may change if Pakistan needs allies and financial assistance to keep pace with India, but it is a long-term concern.

Now, rather than exaggerating the implications of a Pakistani-

based "Islamic bomb," the major concern should be on the accelerated Iranian and revived Iraqi efforts to join the nuclear club. Even if the US is willing to continue to bear the burden of single-handedly supporting the non-proliferation regime, it is clear that this is not enough to block nuclear chaos.

After decades of easy profits and lax controls, the claimants to a major world role, such as the European Union and Japan, may finally take the problem of proliferation seriously and support the US in blocking the nuclear ambitions of Teheran and Baghdad.

There are even some signs that Russia and China are concerned about the implications of a world of many nuclear powers for their own security. If this happens, it is possible, that the South Asian nuclear madness will be contained, and the Middle East will be spared the instabilities of a nuclear arms race.

Dangers of a unilateral withdrawal

MOSHE ZAK

The public debate over whether a serving IDF officer is permitted to make statements like those of Brig-Gen. Erez Gerstein, commander of the liaison unit in Lebanon, distracted attention from his failure to explain the most important of his comments. Gerstein did not elaborate on what he meant by saying that the campaign for unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon is endangering his life.

Since Chief of General Staff Lt-Gen. Amnon Lipkin Shahak has reaffirmed that IDF officers must avoid statements on controversial questions, it is unlikely that Gerstein will want to explain or elaborate on his reference to personal danger.

But it's not hard to realize that an officer commanding a liaison unit in Lebanon is required by his position to meet many Lebanese citizens. He is exposed to retaliation from Lebanese citizens who will be trying to gain an insurance policy against the day of judgment after the IDF withdraws and the various terrorist organizations return to the security zone.

The government's plan for withdrawal from Lebanon under Security Council Resolution 425 involves security arrangements and is worlds away from unilateral withdrawal. The security arrangements include concern for South Lebanese Army personnel, to ensure that the terrorist organizations do not make mincemeat of them for their "sin" of cooperating with Israel.

Unilateral withdrawal means abandoning the SLA and all the Lebanese who assisted us in defending the residents of Galilee. The southern Lebanese are not up on the mysteries of internal Israeli politics. They don't know that the noisy demands for unilateral withdraw-

al are not representative of the opinion of a majority of Israelis. The demonstrations in Israel provoke concern among the Lebanese, who think Israel is nearing breaking point, and will leave the security zone.

Fear of the unknown may drive some Lebanese to acts of desperation and rejection of cooperation with Israel by aiding Hizbullah in

PROPOSERS of unilateral withdrawal know perfectly well that such a move will not satisfy the Syrians, and that Syria will not respond by stopping terrorism along our northern border. Even Hizbullah, after several vague and ambiguous statements, has made it clear that there will be no ceasefire, even after IDF withdrawal from Lebanon.

Syria will torpedo any Israeli retreat from southern Lebanon unless accompanied by gains on the Golan

its acts of terrorism. It is not impossible that some Lebanese will try to assassinate Israelis in key positions, with whom they have already had contact.

The twilight zone between two regimes is the hardest time for a retreating army, especially when withdrawal is unilateral, without any settlement with the incoming power. This, not Hizbullah's morale, is the immediate danger from the cumulative impression on the other side of the border concerning withdrawal.

Even if the debate in Israel encourages Hizbullah, it is legitimate and should certainly not be silenced. But when that debate inflames the area in which the IDF is active, and creates an immediate danger to life, Israeli officials have no right to conceal this fact from the public. Gerstein's superiors, and not him himself, should be drawing attention to the destructive implications of the atmosphere of closing down Lebanon, and this will not in any way damage our democracy.

It's clear that the Lebanese leaders want to impose Lebanese sovereignty on all the territory up to the Israeli border. It's clear that they will welcome any IDF withdrawal from their territory, whether with an agreement on security arrangements or through a unilateral withdrawal.

But the Syrians reject both options. They will do everything they can to interfere with any Israeli step which will take the Lebanese card out of their hand, and prevent them from using it to fessine the Golan Heights away from Israel.

Unilateral IDF withdrawal from Lebanon doesn't suit them either. They will try to block it by using the Palestinian terrorist organizations headquartered in Damascus. After an IDF withdrawal, it will not be a mission impossible for Syria to instruct several Palestinian terrorist cells to shoot across the border at Israeli farmers, or even at a bus full of school children.

Such provocation will demand a firm reaction, and will cause large

forces to return to the security zone.

The writer Andre Malraux used to say: When mothers look up at their sons in their jet planes, they pray that they will fly low and slow, without knowing that this is the most dangerous way to fly. A hasty withdrawal from southern Lebanon, theoretically intended to prevent casualties, is liable to shed much blood. Withdrawal without appropriate security arrangements implies the danger of a wider war, with more losses of life.

There is no short cut to a settlement in Lebanon. There is a long way to go before Syria agrees to conduct negotiations on all the issues, including Lebanon, without preconditions. Today it seems hopeless, because Syria has laid down a condition – the return of the entire Golan. Their pretext is that during talks with Israel, in 1993, the possibility of a withdrawal to 1967 borders was mentioned. But talks are not a binding agreement, and we should be in no hurry to agree to this twist.

We are also entitled to ask the US to slow down its courting of Damascus, which unnecessarily strengthens Hafez Assad and encourages him to insist on his preconditions which delays a settlement in Lebanon.

There was no need for the US to remove the Syrian government from the list of drug merchants. It should be enough for Washington to look at a map of the Bekaa Valley, full of fields growing drugs which are exported for hundreds of millions of dollars. The US shouldn't have been in a hurry to grant Syria a pardon, and Israel should be in no hurry to agree to Syria's conditions to renew negotiations with Israel. More patience is called for in order to convince Syria to negotiate a cease-fire in southern Lebanon.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PALESTINIAN KILLERS

Sir, – As the father of a young woman who was killed by terrorists in the Middle East, I applaud the Clinton administration's offer of a \$2 million reward for information leading to the capture of the terrorists who killed four American citizens in Pakistan. But I wonder why the administration has failed to take such steps in other cases of Americans who have been murdered abroad, including my daughter?

My daughter, Alisa, 21, was killed – along with seven other innocent people – in a Palestinian Arab terrorist bombing in the Gaza Strip in 1995. Last year, the Israeli government reported that Nabil Sharabi, the terrorist who "helped prepare the bomb" used in that attack, is being sheltered by Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority, which controls most of Gaza.

Seven other Palestinian Arab terrorists involved in the killings of 11 American citizens during 1993-1998 are also in Palestinian Authority territory. Yet Arafat has refused to hand them over to Israel for prosecution (as the Oslo Accords require), and the Clinton administration has refrained from asking Arafat to hand them over to the US even though they could be

prosecuted here under the terms of the anti-terrorism act of 1986.

Some administration officials have claimed that they have insufficient evidence to pursue Sharabi and the other Palestinian Arab killers of Americans. I am skeptical about this claim, because I know that in at least four cases, Israeli courts have reviewed the evidence of these Palestinian terrorists and found it sufficient to issue arrest warrants. But if the Clinton administration is concerned about the quality or quantity of the evidence they currently possess, the logical next step would be to offer a large reward, just as the US did in the Pakistani case, advertise the reward in Palestinian Arab newspapers, just as the US placed large ads in the Pakistani press; and offer potential informers protection and relocation, just as the US has done in Pakistan.

There should be no double standard. The US should pursue Palestinian killers of Americans just as vigorously as they have pursued Pakistan killers of Americans.

STEPHEN FLATOW

Jersey City, N.J.

BETTER EXAMPLE

Sir, – Rather than engaging in anti-Torah media events, maybe the visiting Reform rabbis could return home and try to stem the 60% intermarriage rate within their own congregations.

They could also strive to correct their own blatant desecration of basic Jewish tenets such as Shabbat and kashrut so they can serve as better examples to their troubled flocks.

SHMUEL HAGER

Jerusalem.

YASSIN'S RETURN

Sir, – I read that the Minister of Defense Yitzhak Mordechai has been criticized for allowing Sheikh Ahmed Yassin to leave Gaza for medical reasons. In my opinion, this was the correct decision. Had he been refused to exit, all his ailments, real or imaginary, would have been blamed on us.

Again, not to allow him to return would be wrong policy on our part. How can we refuse to allow a sick, crippled old man to join his loved ones? Of course, he will speak out against us. It does not matter whether he is in Gaza or roaming the world. Let's hope that the P.L.O. refuses him entry. He will be a bigger problem for them than he will be for us.

MORRIS BACHER

Herzliya Pithah.

OLD GIRLS

Sir, – There will be a reunion on August 8 of ex-pupils of Roundhay High School, Leeds, England.

Any old girls who are interested

can contact me for details at 09-7429147.

MYRA GOULD

Ra'anana.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: On June 12, 1933, The Palestine Post reported the lowest rainfall in 85 years. In Jerusalem, where records had been maintained over this period, the rainfall of 281mm, compared unfavorably with the lowest figure recorded: 310mm, in 1924-25.

25 years ago: On June 12, 1973, The Jerusalem Post reported that the German chancellor Willy Brandt, on a tour of Masada, was apparently unshaken after wind sent his helicopter rolling perilously close to the edge of the 400-

meter cliff. On his return to Bonn, Brandt told reporters that Israel had received him with great hospitality and that the time was ripe for direct Israeli-Arab talks.

Alexander Zvielli

"COKE DAY" at Greenbrier High School in Evans, Georgia, was a chance for Mike Cameron to show off his taste in soft drinks.

He wore a Pepsi t-shirt – and was promptly suspended.

Coke Day was dreamed up by the student government as part of the school's entry in a national Team Up With Coca-Cola contest that earns \$10,000 for the winning school.

In the program, Coca-Cola Co. invites high schools throughout the country – except those that have exclusive contracts with PepsiCo Inc. – to come up with a plan for distributing Coke discount cards locally.

The school staged a rally in which the students lined up to spell out COKE while more than a dozen company executives looked on.

In recent years, American businesses have started reaching out directly to public schools. In the highly competitive soft drink market, some schools have signed contracts agreeing to exclude a competitor's product in exchange for cash payments.

But having programs such as Coca-Cola's takes the commercialization to another level, Marianne Manilov of the Center for Commercial-Free Public Education said. "This is out of hand. The school door has been thrown open to marketers."

According to Cameron, he had worn his Pepsi shirt all day but didn't get in trouble until it was time for the picture. "I was standing in the middle of the 'C,'" he said. The photographer was above the group on a cherry picker for an aerial shot.

According to the principal, how-

ever, Cameron was wearing another shirt until the picture-taking, then whipped it off to expose the Pepsi shirt underneath.

The principal, Gloria Hamilton, called Cameron's actions a disruptive prank. The punishment, she said, was not for wearing a Pepsi shirt; it was for being disruptive and trying to destroy the school picture. That offense normally earns a six-day suspension.

Pepsi seemed to be enjoying the whole episode. A company spokesman called Cameron a "trend setter with impeccable taste" in clothes, and we're going to make sure he has plenty of shirts in the future.

Coca-Cola got in a dig of its own. "It sounds like an easy way to unload all that leftover Pepsi stuff that nobody else wanted," a spokesman said.

CLINTON IS being neutered. That's Buddy Clinton, the president's dog.

Plans to curb the Labrador's sex life were detailed by White House doctor Connie Mariano to actress Doris Day, who heads an animal welfare group that urged Clinton to set an example to pet owners. (Apparently they weren't kidding when they said this.)

A representative of the Doris Day Animal Welfare League said the actress was thrilled by the news. "She's extremely happy," said Ann Sparks, assistant director of Span Day USA, the group's annual animal neutering campaign.

"The president is really sending a good message to the American people about responsible pet ownership," Sparks said.

The bogus conversion compromise

ERIC H. YOFFIE

The 170 Reform leaders from North America who arrived this week to celebrate Israel's 50th anniversary found themselves in the middle of the country's religious wars. In the process, they received quite a lesson in Israeli politics.

Stopping at the Western Wall on their way from the airport, they saw that the Wall area was virtually empty of people on a late Monday afternoon. Nonetheless, they were required to pray at the place's farthest corner, adjacent to the exit gate, surrounded by barriers and police.

It is sometimes difficult for Israelis to appreciate the impact that such an experience can have on Diaspora Jews. North American leaders, who for 30 years have joined the struggle for the unity of Israel's capital, do not find it easy to understand why the Old City's holy places should be closed to them when they wish to pray according to their normal custom. They do not understand why a government which has vowed never to expel a single Jew from any part of Eretz Yisrael is so quick to expel Reform Jews from the vicinity of the Wall.

But nothing prepared these leaders for what they were to hear

about the conversion crisis, which arose anew last week when the government decided to resubmit conversion legislation to the Knesset.

Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman spoke to them on Tuesday, giving a passionate plea for dialogue among all streams of Judaism. The Reform leaders responded by noting that their movement had accepted this principle from the beginning. Why, they asked, did the legislation now being considered reward those who rejected dialogue — namely, the Chief Rabbinate?

The legislative proposal currently being put forward is described as implementing the Neeman Committee recommendations. In fact, it does nothing of the sort. The Neeman recommendations called for a new era of religious understanding, based upon dialogue, cooperation, and mutual respect among the religious streams. The Reform and Conservative movements and the Chief Rabbinate were to work together in preparing converts for conversion, with the final stage — the actual conversion — to be done by an Orthodox rabbinic court.

The recommendations specifically stated that a lenient approach was to be used by the court in car-

rying out its conversions.

As we all know, the Chief Rabbinate rejected these recommendations out of hand, and used the occasion to heap abuse upon Reform and Conservative Judaism. But the "compromise" proposal

Reform Jews will never accept the total surrender on conversion that is being demanded of them

now being considered says not a word about the Chief Rabbinate working with the Reform and Conservative movements in preparing converts. No mention is made of the lenient spirit that the Chief Rabbinate was to adopt in its conversion courts. What is mentioned is the one element of the original recommendations that the Chief Rabbinate was happy to accept: affirmation of the rabbinic's right to be the sole authority to conduct recognized conver-

sions in Israel.

TRUE, there is reference to a Jewish studies institute for preparation of conversion candidates in which representatives of all streams are to take part. But since those with the authority to convert — the Chief Rabbinate — have refused to participate and reject the very concept of cooperative preparation of candidates for conversion, the institute is certain to be empty of content and devoid of any real meaning.

In short, no matter how often government representatives say that they support a "compromise" that carries out what the Neeman Committee proposed, leaders of the Reform movement feel betrayed. They took the extraordinary step of conceding final control over conversions to the Chief Rabbinate, in return for which they were to enter into a historic new covenant that was to grant them recognition based upon cooperation with Israel's religious establishment.

But six months after the original agreement was completed, all the benefits have disappeared. All that remains in the proposal is the Chief Rabbinate's total authority over the conversion process, now to be written into law for the first time in

Israel's history.

The Reform movement is still prepared for a true compromise. This might mean a return to the original Neeman recommendations, a technical solution, or a new system that would put conversion into the hands of different religious authorities prepared to commit themselves to a cooperative approach. But this much is certain: Reform Jews will never accept the total surrender that is being demanded of them.

The Reform leaders now visiting Israel marvel at the chutzpah of those who tell them that the "compromise" proposal is a historic step forward when it looks so much like the old conversion bill in different form; this proposal seems like, and in fact is, a cover for maintaining undisturbed the Orthodox monopoly.

The government's plan may maintain the unity of the coalition, but it will not maintain the unity of the Jewish people. On the contrary, if passed into law, it is certain to tear the Jewish people apart.

The writer, a rabbi, is president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, an organization of 875 Reform synagogues in North America.

Middle Israel

AMOTZ ASA-EL

The new politics

When David Ben-Gurion headed the Histadrut after its foundation 78 years ago, he used to keep two photographs on his desk — one of Mahatma Gandhi, the other of Socrates. Quite a contrast to the portraits of nuclear-builder Shimon Peres and arch-philosopher David Levy, whose portraits one often finds respectively behind Amir Peretz and Maxim Levy.

True to the innocence, humanism, and enlightenment which characterized the Histadrut before it degenerated into a bureaucratic monstrosity, a political scam, and a financial black hole, the embryonic Jewish commonwealth's

The most glaring of its crimes was the Histadrut's habit — which in later years was defended almost as a religious tenet — of shoving its hand into the public's pockets by exacting an involuntary deduction from workers' salaries, as well as from their health-fund installments. Much of that money ended up financing the bloated salaries and extensive travel of hordes of union hacks.

Even more damaging was the Histadrut's effective torpedoing of assorted economic emergency plans during the years of hyperinflation, when economists across the board prescribed the bitter medicines of layoffs, pay cuts, and fiscal restraint. Hyper-inflation

Now that the working classes have done so, it's time for the middle classes to follow suit and abandon the outdated Likud-Labor fault line

mythical trade union launched a host of non-controversial enterprises: like the downscale Hamashbir retail chain, the affordable Clalit Health Fund, the readily accessible Bank Hapoalim, the exceptionally prolific Am Oved publishing house, and, of course, the once-ubiquitous Davar daily, which was edited by Histadrut co-founder Berl Katznelson himself.

Back then, the non-unionized were bourgeois property owners while Histadrutniks were avowed socialists who, in some cases, even actually read Marx. With this dichotomy still etched deep in many Israeli minds, Amir Peretz's federation of Likudniks, Laborites, Shasniks, and Israeli Arabs seemed to many as plausible as Michael Jordan joining the Norwegian soccer team.

In reality, however, this week's election unveils not only reshuffled political pieces, but also the buds of a long-overdue redefinition of our partisan life.

In Katznelson's vision, the union was meant not only to protect workers against arbitrary employers, but also to quietly assemble tools of statehood for a polity in the making, and, while at it, provide workers with anything and everything from cheap shoes to good translations of Tolstoy, Turgenev, or Hemingway; much like he had done while still in the Pale of Settlement, as a teacher with the Mefitzi Haskalah (Enlightenment Spreaders) Society.

Meanwhile, the Histadrut mushroomed into an economic powerhouse, sporting such godzillas as the Koor conglomerate's sprawling low-tech empire and the Solel Boneh construction company, which even before 1948 was already running projects from Ethiopia to Iran.

Yet tragically, when Katznelson's and BG's state-in-the-making was finally born, half a decade after the former's death, the Histadrut was left intact as a political juggernaut.

Unlike the Palmach's elite commando units, which Ben-Gurion forced to merge into the IDF, and unlike the kibbutz movement, which he maneuvered into a schism between fans and opponents of the USSR, the Histadrut — whether because Ben-Gurion was too emotionally attached to it or because he did not see it threatening his power — continued to wield enormous clout. So much so that even a former defense minister, Pinhas Lavon, took its helm in the mid-1950s.

AND SO, as the years elapsed, it turned out that what began as a tool for achieving statehood had cancered out into a state within a state, and at times even a state above the state.

could have been beaten years before 1985 had the Histadrut not stood in the way: it took a Labor premier, Shimon Peres, to convince the unions that there was no other choice (much like the Netanyahu government is likely to ultimately make plain to the Right that ceding West Bank land is inevitable.) The old Histadrut also served as an alternative job repository for a frustrated Labor Party during the lengthy years when it languished in the opposition. In sum, it was an octopus, heavily involved politically and a constant thorn in the side of market economics.

Now, in the aftermath of this week's strange elections for the Histadrut's leadership, those of us who care for justice, and common sense can finally release a sigh of relief.

With its financial holdings mostly privatized and the automatic taxation system largely eradicated, many thought the union would be doomed to extinction. That, of course, was wrong, because life is life and worker-employer conflicts really do happen, and when they do, wage earners are all too often ill-equipped to effectively defend themselves.

In other words, that infamous Histadrut of old deserved to be transformed rather than destroyed. This week, with Likud and Labor candidates running "on-the-same ticket, chances for a future fanning of labor-unrest flames so as to promote a narrow partisan agenda have been considerably reduced.

Indeed, we have come a long way since the mid-1930s, when Jabotinsky's Revisionists and the Histadrut's kibbutzniks were constantly at loggerheads, sometimes in the most physical sense.

Yes, the participation of a mere 12.5 percent of wage earners in this week's vote means that the Histadrut has been marginalized politically, but economically it remains a healthily downsized and institutionally focused force to reckon with.

Now, with the working classes having abandoned the outdated Likud-Labor fault line, it's time for the middle classes to follow suit.

In the new politics, with the territorial debate finally settled whether with or without peace, the heirs of today's major parties will cease to blather about outmoded ideologies and instead join hands to represent the social mainstream's interests — that host of ever illusive, but widely sought goals, from low taxation to separation of religion and state. The small parties are already doing a hell of a job catering for their constituencies' vested interests. It's time the big ones learned from them.

Clearing the air

JONATHAN ROSENBLUM

We all owe Uri Regev, head of the Reform Movement's Religious Action Center, a debt of gratitude. Writing two weeks ago in this paper, Regev succeeded in clearing away the obfuscations that have clouded the conversion issue in Israel for the past year.

For more than a year, the Conservative and Reform movements have claimed that they were prepared to accept the religious courts of the Chief Rabbinate having the final authority over conversion in return for some involvement in the educational process leading

Torah. Informed of the prohibition against murder, he replied that murder is part of their way of life and rejected the Torah. Ammon and Moab reacted similarly when they learned of the prohibition against adultery, and Ishmael to the prohibition against theft. Only the Jews answered without inquiring into the contents, "We shall do and we shall hear."

FOLLOWING Regev, God should have offered to strike the offending portions from the Torah rather than deny anyone the opportunity to be Jewish

Judaism has never been an open-admission club, nor have we historically sought converts

up. Judaism has never been an open-admission club, nor have we historically sought converts. Our tenacity as a people owes, in large part, to our strenuous efforts to preserve inviolate the identity of the Jew.

We are not racists; we do not worship gene pools. All who sincerely wish to bind themselves to the faith community of Israel, as our ancestors did at Sinai, are welcome and even honored. But joining the Jewish people is not easy; nor was it meant to be.

The Talmud forbids the acceptance of converts for ulterior motives. During the reigns of David and Solomon, when the Jewish kingdom was blessed with economic prosperity and military success, no converts were accepted because there could be no assurance of their sincerity.

What Regev proposes would effectively allow anyone who woke up one morning feeling Jewish to declare, "Hallelujah, I'm a Jew." What, realistically, is added by a requirement to appear before three people bearing pieces of paper with the title "rabbi," who perform intermarriages or same-sex marriages for a fee.

An institutional framework — Reform, Reconstructionist, or Conservative — is meaningless in terms of establishing standards. Nothing is more sacrosanct to Reform Judaism than the autonomy of individual rabbi to follow his own lights.

There are many more Jews active in cults than members of the Reconstructionist movement, which is barely 40 years old. If a cult member proclaims his own brand of Judaism and gives his followers *semita* (rabbinic ordination), on what basis would their "conversions" be rejected?

Our common Jewishness reveals itself by the day to have less and less power to unify the citizens of Israel. But whatever unifying power remains will be completely vitiated by turning Jew into merely a synonym for Israeli and a certificate of conversion just another perk for those admitted under the Law of Return.

If that occurs, we will do for Israel what patrilineal descent did for America — create two totally separate communities that cannot even agree on each other's Jewishness.



The 'gonva' caper

MARK A. HELLER

It was reported on television this week that several soldiers, including a few high-ranking officers in the Intelligence Corps, are suspected of having illegally copied computer programs and are under investigation by the Military Police. If the suspicions are borne out, the culprits will have to be punished. After all, software theft is a crime.

At the same time, it may be said in defense of the alleged perpetrators that unauthorized copying and distribution of programs is a universal phenomenon. In Israel, it is so common that the Hebrew language has added another term to the lexicon of modern technology: In addition to "homra" (hardware) and "rochna" (software), computer geeks routinely refer to "gonva" (stolenware). Even so, "everybody does it" is not a very persuasive excuse.

A more powerful mitigating consideration is the suggestion that, in most cases, the suspected criminals were not motivated by personal gain, but by professional dedication: Their unit and department budgets simply didn't allow them to buy the programs they needed to do their jobs. In other words, their commitment to the mission and their desire to carry it out more effectively made them resort to methods that were creative, even if somewhat questionable.

In this sense, what they did is admirable, and an innocent observer might be forgiven for thinking that the *gonva* caper could inspire imitation in other areas where inadequate resources also get in the way of accom-

plishing important objectives. But the truth is that this sort of logic has long since penetrated other fields of public service, especially politics.

In the United States, for example, the Committee to Reelect the President lacked sufficient knowledge about the opposition and tried to improve Richard Nixon's chances in 1972 by stealing the files of the Democratic National Committee from the Watergate Hotel. In Britain, the Labor Party won last year's election by modeling its strategy on that of the American Democratic Party and its candidate on the American president. And in Israel, several parties suffering from inadequate numbers of local voters often try to improve their performance at elections by bringing in clones from abroad.

STILL, these examples just scratch the surface. Much more could be done. The prime minister, for example, suffers from a "popularity gap" outside the country. Why not appoint Michael Jordan co-prime minister?

The prime minister has a popularity problem outside the country. Why not appoint Michael Jordan co-prime minister?

With special responsibility for relations with the foreign media and Arab leaders? The Labor Party has an enormous image problem inside the country. Why not steal a copy of Arthur Finkelstein's brain scan? The Histadrut is afflicted by massive apathy. Why not rename it "Histadrut-Betar?" The Knesset is too passive? Ask for a long-term loan of Newt Gingrich. The economy is in the doldrums? Steal Alan Greenspan.

The rule of law is under threat? Copy the US Constitution, or, better yet, appoint Perry Mason head of the Bar Association and Clint Eastwood deputy minister of religious affairs. The peace process is comatose? Make Nelson Mandela head of the PLO, or the Israeli government, or both. In fact, the list of seductive possibilities is almost endless.

But further reflection will show that these solutions are just mirages. There are no shortcuts, no quick fixes, no alternatives to more reasoned choices and constant vigilance by the Israeli public. And only education and socialization have a chance of bringing that about.

Unless someone is really audacious. What if, at the next election, someone flies in, not just a couple of thousand voters from Brooklyn, but the entire American electorate? True, this would be the greatest *gonva* heist of all time, but it might work.

And even if there were a criminal investigation and it did lead to an indictment, there's no reason to think that anybody would actually be convicted for any offense connected to politics. That only happens in banana republics.

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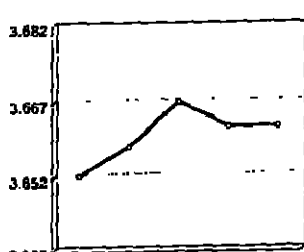
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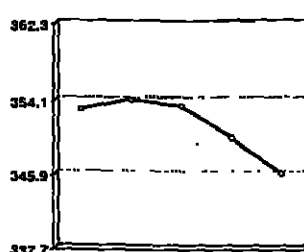
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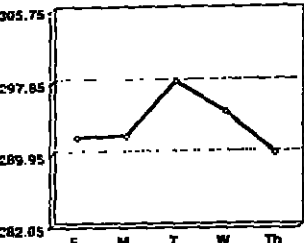


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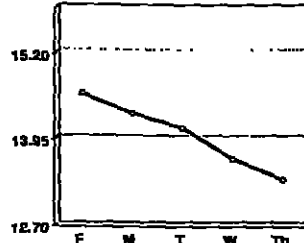
GOLD

\$ per ounce

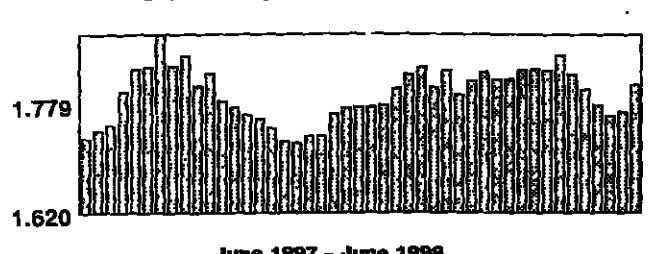


OIL

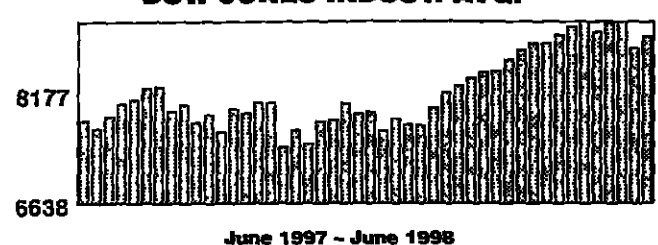
\$ per barrel of Brent crude



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BITS & BYTES

By NINA GILBERT

Orbotech gets \$10m. order from Taiwan

Orbotech has received a \$10 million order for its automated optical inspection systems for printed circuit board manufacturing from Vertex Precision Electronics, a large PCB manufacturer in Taiwan, in its largest order to date in its core AOI business. The Yavne-based company has also reached an agreement to buy two businesses from the Japan-based Toyo Ink Mfg. Co. its Japanese printed circuit board sales and marketing operations and its computer-aided manufacturing product line developed by its Israeli subsidiary, EIT Ltd.

Converse gets \$5m. order from China

Converse Technology has been chosen by the Wuhan Telecom Bureau for the supply of \$5 million in voice messaging systems in China's Hubei Province, in what the company said would pave the way into the developing Chinese telecommunications market. The system will enable customers to subscribe to a variety of messaging services, including call answering, voice messaging, virtual telephone, bulletin board, reminder service, and special delivery. Converse's subsidiary is the Tel Aviv-based Efrat Future Technology.

Vital-Tech product chosen by Sharper Image

Vital-Tech is to supply 10,000 units of its Vital Touch massager to the American specialty electronics chain Sharper Image, where they will be sold for \$100 each. Vital-Tech is a three-year-old graduate of a technological incubator, and is now located at the Rotem industrial park in Mishor Yamin. The machine moves in circles and mimics hand and finger movements and can be used on joints.

Balisoft Technologies raises \$8.5m.

Balisoft Technologies, an Internet start-up based in Kfar Sava and Toronto, has raised \$8.5 million in venture capital to boost its Internet customer service product. The company, established last year, has developed the first version of its LiveContact program, which appears as an icon enabling end-users to get either voice- or chat-based customer assistance from web sites. The company is now marketing the product to businesses, while use for customers will be free.

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JP Morgan to enter local market

By DAVID HARRIS

New York-based investment house JP Morgan will soon enter the Israeli economy, according to a statement from the Finance Ministry and company sources.

During a meeting in London yesterday, company executives told Treasury Director General Ben-Zion Zilberfarb they will shortly offer a variety of services here, including investments and advancing mergers and acquisitions.

The Treasury statement said Zilberfarb met Morgan's European emerging markets head Tony Best, who told him the compa-

ny's decision to enter Israel is based on the country's economic policies and the recent liberalization of foreign currency.

In the coming months the investment house will work out a concrete plan of action, added Best.

While the company has no plans to open a representative office here at this stage, a source explained Morgan's main areas of interest.

The company is looking to trade local markets from London, including domestic fixed income, foreign exchange, and Euroshekel.

A company representative will visit

Israel to look for long-term investment banking opportunities. The Treasury statement said this would be principally in the field of mergers and acquisitions.

The company would also be involved in investments in high-tech and start-ups.

The source said this week's America Online \$287 million purchase of high-tech company Mirabilis is the type of deal with which Morgan would like to be involved.

"Our knowledge and activities in Israel are currently extremely limited," said the source. "We're late, there are lots of other investment banks in Israel. We're not interested in creating a copycat approach, we

need to find out where we can add some value in the market, otherwise we're not going to get any business done."

Morgan's key operations are split into several areas: investment banking, brokerage services, securities dealing, commodities, derivatives currencies, asset-management, risk and liquidity positions and equity investment.

The company has been hit by the Asian financial crisis, earlier this year announced it would consider a merger and announced layoffs of some five percent of its staff. Assets totaled \$262.16 billion at the end of 1997, with sales amounting to \$17.70b.



Investors fight Hong Kong business regulations

Demonstrators from failed brokerage firms stage a sit-in protest outside the Hong Kong Stock Exchange yesterday. The protesters took action after the government announced that they could only claim up to \$19,000 from their multi-million dollar Hong Kong dollar investments for compensation.

'Economist': Israel's '98 growth 0.9%

By DAVID HARRIS

Economic growth in Israel will end this year at just 0.9 percent, according to a revised edition of the Economist Intelligence Unit's country forecast.

The document predicts that the Asian crisis, the continuing slump in tourism and a steep fall in investments will leave the rise in the gross domestic product (GDP) at its lowest level for at least 38 years. The lowest level since central bank records began was set in 1966 at 1%.

The EIU suggests growth will reach 2.1% next year, with rises to 4.2%, 4.8%, and 3.6% in the following three years respectively.

Unemployment will peak at the

end of 1998 at 9.5%, the report predicts, and will only drop back to 6.6% by 2002.

On the inflation-front the report is a little less optimistic than government officials, who point to inflation dipping below 4% in the next couple of years. The consumer price index is to close 1998 at 4.8%, with inflation falling to 4% over the following two years, down to 3.8% in 2001 but then rising again to 4% by 2002.

A further sign of the economic slowdown is to be seen in per capita GDP, according to the EIU. Last year's per capita GDP of \$16,800 is expected to drop considerably to \$16,150, and only surpass the 1997 level in 2002, when it is expected to be \$17,190.

Paradigm Geophysical raises \$23.4m. in IPO

By NINA GILBERT

Paradigm Geophysical, the Herzliya-based developer of software for oil and gas exploration, has completed its initial public offering in New York of 32 percent of the company for a total of \$23.4 million.

The shares were offered at \$7, considerably lower than the price of about \$11 the company had expected to ask for several months ago, when it delayed the offering due to market conditions.

The company said it intends to use the net proceeds of \$20.1m. plus \$1.4m. from available cash resources to repay bridge loans and make payments required to fund the acquisition of CogniSeis

Development, Inc., which closed in October 1997. Through the acquisition of CogniSeis, Paradigm added seismic data processing and interpretation software product lines.

Due to the price reduction, private share holders suspended plans to offer another 800,000 shares of the company.

The company was established 10 years ago as a spinoff from Sciex. It has offices in Houston, London, and Perth.

Trade deficit shrinks 31% in May

By Jerusalem Post Staff

The recent growth in exports continued into May, leading to a 31 percent reduction in the trade deficit compared to the same month last year, according to figures published yesterday by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

Imports reached \$2.233 billion last month, while exports totaled \$1.781b, leaving the trade deficit at \$452 million. Twelve months ago the deficit amounted to \$654m. — the result of imports to the value of \$2.378b. and exports reaching \$1.724b.

During the last six months, exports increased at an annualized 14%, compared to 6% between June and November last year. Furthermore, in the six months to May 31, industrial exports increased at a yearly 15 - 16%, as against 7% in the previous five months.

Of May's exports, 74% were industrial and of software, with 23% diamonds and 3% agricultural goods.

Diamond exports totaled \$322m. in the first five months, a 14% fall on the equivalent figure last year.

Raw materials comprised 47% of all imports, with machinery and other investment goods taking up an additional 18%. Between March and May there was an annual 9% increase in investment goods coming into the country. This compares to a 10% decline from September 1997 through February.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister's Office Director-General Moshe Leon yesterday spoke optimistically about the future shape of the economy. As the Treasury begins its 1999 budget deliberations, Leon said next year there will be further investments in infrastructure and R&D.

Postal Authority launches marketing drive

By JUDY SIEGEL

Senior Postal Authority executives will have to leave their air-conditioned offices and go into the field to persuade businesspeople to use its mail services more intensively.

Authority Director-General Moshe Tery said yesterday the scheme "is an important attempt to improve the business orientation in which postal units operate." Senior managers and other staffers in 700 units around the country will be required to initiate meetings with nearby businesspeople to discuss how they can use the Postal Authority to their mutual benefit — and their success rates will be reported on a daily basis to top management via computer. Those who do well will get bonuses.

Among the services and products to be promoted are stamped envelopes and postcards, greeting cards, stationery in various sizes, and direct marketing by mail. In addition, the authority is offering special messenger service: young people on motorbikes will make the rounds to the company's regular clients and deliver the collected mail, payments, and packages.

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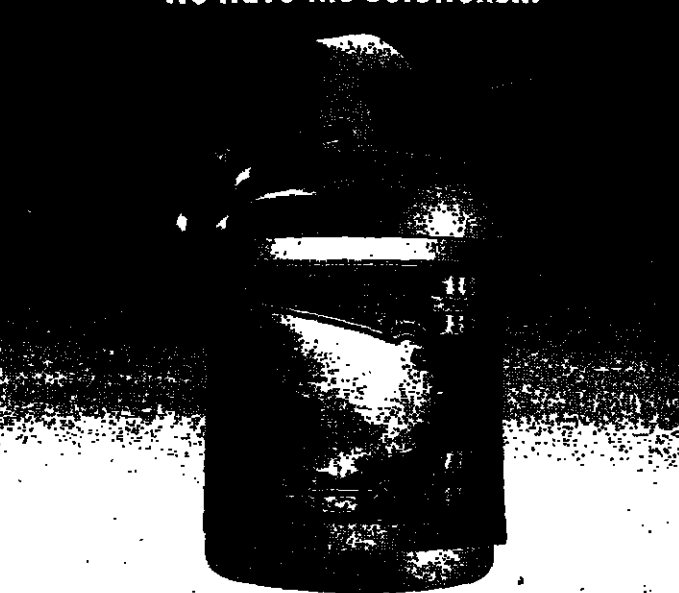
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[illegible]

TASE slumps over Asian woes

Yas

LAST	CHANGE
Tel Aviv 100	-1.01
Bank Leumi	-0.25
Bank Hapoalim	-0.15
Bank Mizrahi	-0.10
Bank Leumi	-0.25
Bank Hapoalim	-0.15
Bank Mizrahi	-0.10
Bank Leumi	-0.25
Bank Hapoalim	-0.15
Bank Mizrahi	-0.10

SOURCE: S&P COMSTOCK (DATE 11-JUN-98)

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

LAST	CHANGE
US Dollar (1)	3.987
US Dollar (1)	3.987
US Dollar (1)	3.987
US Dollar (1)	3.987
US Dollar (1)	3.987

NEW YORK MARKET INDEXES

LAST	CHANGE
DJ Industrials	-1.01
DJ Transp.	-0.24
DJ Util.	-0.15
DJ Comp.	-0.38
DJ Energy	-0.19
DJ Health	-0.14
DJ Tech	-0.17

OTHER MARKET INDEXES

LAST	CHANGE
FTSE 100	-0.25
Nikkei 225	-0.15
DAX	-0.10
Hang Seng	-0.10
ASX	-0.10

DOLLAR CROSSRATES (US)

LAST	CHANGE
Yen	-0.0025
Yen	-0.0025
Yen	-0.0025
Yen	-0.0025
Yen	-0.0025

US COMMODITIES

LAST	CHANGE
Crude Oil	-0.15
Crude Oil	-0.15
Crude Oil	-0.15
Crude Oil	-0.15
Crude Oil	-0.15

LONDON COMMODITIES

LAST	CHANGE
Crude Oil	-0.15
Crude Oil	-0.15
Crude Oil	-0.15
Crude Oil	-0.15
Crude Oil	-0.15

SPOT MARKET METALS (US)

LAST	CHANGE
Gold	-0.15
Gold	-0.15
Gold	-0.15
Gold	-0.15
Gold	-0.15

NEW YORK METAL FUTURES

LAST	CHANGE
Gold	-0.15
Gold	-0.15
Gold	-0.15
Gold	-0.15
Gold	-0.15

LONDON METAL FIXES

LAST	CHANGE
Gold	-0.15
Gold	-0.15
Gold	-0.15
Gold	-0.15
Gold	-0.15

Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd.

LAST	CHANGE
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987

Pacific Mediterranean Capital Markets Group

LAST	CHANGE
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS

LAST	CHANGE
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (11.6.98)

LAST	CHANGE
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987

CHECKS AND TRANSFERS

LAST	CHANGE
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987

BANKNOTES

LAST	CHANGE
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987

Rep. Rates**

LAST	CHANGE
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987
US Dollar	3.987

Bank of Israel

SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

Tel Aviv

The TASE dropped yesterday for a third day amid concern Asia's economic woes will continue to pull down world equity markets, particularly US markets where many Israeli companies are listed.

Nice Systems Ltd., a maker of voice and fax archiving equipment, lost 5.7 percent to NIS 133.1 after its American depositary receipts dropped 5.5 percent yesterday in the US. That pulled the Maof Index of 25 largest companies down 1.13 percent to NIS 345.90.

Japan's Nikkei 225 stock index dropped 2.1 percent to a six-month low after the Japanese yen weakened against the dollar, pulling down currencies of other Asian countries and making it more difficult for them to repay loans.

"There is a fear of markets abroad because Asia is collapsing," said Dror Kraus, an analyst at Koor Investment House. "It impacts on Wall Street and on us." Many companies on the Tel Aviv exchange either have dual listings in the US or own stakes in Israeli companies traded there. About 28 percent of the Tel Aviv market's value is either directly or indirectly affected by the US market, according to the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

The Tel Aviv-100 Index of

largest companies lost 1.01 percent to NIS 330.35.

Across the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, NIS 276.5 million (\$75.5 million) of shares were traded. More than two issues dropped for every one that rose.

United Mizrahi Bank Ltd., the fourth-largest bank and the most active issue with NIS 30.3m. shekels in transactions, dropped 1.1 percent to NIS 10.7. The bank's shares, which dropped for a second day after beginning trading on the stock exchange Wednesday, were sold by the government last week at a higher-than-expected 26 percent over the minimum price set in a public offering.

Disappointment with United Mizrahi's decline prompted drops among other banks, analysts said. Bank Leumi lost 2.2 percent to NIS 7.68 and First International Bank of Israel shed 0.5 percent to NIS 2.886.

Machshim-Agan Industries Ltd. dropped 3.9 percent to NIS 11.97. Shares of the maker of herbicide products are expected to fall after it completed an offering of \$100 million in new equity to current shareholders at a share at a price of NIS 6.75, Kraus said.

Europe

UK stocks fell as a drop in Asian markets depressed HSBC Holdings Plc and other companies that do business in the region.

Dollar sets eight-year high against yen

The dollar rose yesterday to its highest level against the yen in almost eight years and to a seven-year high against the deutsche mark, as slumping stocks and currencies in Asia and Russia lured investors to the US currency.

Concern Asian companies will struggle to pay their debts to Japanese banks undermined the yen. Russian securities fell on speculation other governments won't lend Russia enough to prevent a ruble devaluation and a debt default. Germany is Russia's largest lender and trading partner, so financial turmoil in Russia undermines investor confidence in German financial assets and the marks to pay for them.

"People perceive Russia to be Germany's Mexico," said Ken

Windheim, president of Strategic Fixed Income in Arlington, Virginia, which oversees \$5.5 billion, adding that he's sold marks for dollars recently. Meantime, "the continued deterioration of the rest of the Pacific basin weighs on Japan" and is luring investors to the dollar, he said.

The dollar climbed as high as 143.58 yen, its highest since reaching 143.60 yen on September 5, 1990. It was recently at 143.42 yen from 141.57 yen late Wednesday in New York. The US currency also rose as high as 1.8073 marks, its highest since reaching 1.8129 marks April 20. Recently it was at 1.8064 marks from 1.7962 marks.

The dollar got an added lift in New York trading after US

STOCKS

decline since April 27. HSBC, owner of Hongkong Bank, dropped 63 pence to 1447. Among other companies with sales in Hong Kong, Standard Chartered Plc dropped 27.5p to 666, Diageo Plc fell 33p to 720 and Cable & Wireless slid 35p to 685.

Asia

Japanese stocks tumbled to a six-month low as the yen continued to lose ground to the dollar, pulling down the Indonesian rupiah, Singapore dollar and other currencies across Asia.

Benchmark stock indexes in most Asian countries sank Hong Kong stocks fell for a third day, led by HSBC Holdings Plc, as the weaker yen put more pressure on China to devalue its currency, the yuan. Stocks in South Korea and Singapore rose.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 stock index fell 325.22 points, or 2.12 percent, to 15,014.04 - its lowest since Jan. 14. The broader Topix index of all shares on the first section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange dropped 19.79 points to 1178.81.

"The market is afraid it may have another Asian crisis on its hands," said Kunihiko Handa, a general manager at Norin Chukin Asset Management Co. "We've already seen the damage the weak yen can do to regional economies." (Bloomberg)

CURRENCIES

Dollar 3.987 no change
Basket 3.997 +0.194%
Mark 2.886 +0.455%
Sterling 5.985 +0.028%

Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin

said it's up to Japan alone to get its economy on track so other Asian countries can recover from their recent turmoil. The comments reinforced expectations that central

banks from the world's leading industrial countries won't join in a round of dollar selling to boost the yen.

"Rubin's comments have provided a trigger for the dollar" to extend its gains, said Allison Montgomery, an analyst at I.D.E.A., a research firm. "The effectiveness of intervention by the Bank of Japan should prove limited."

The yen slumped earlier as stocks tumbled in Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, China, and Indonesia and currencies in most of those countries fell. Those declines fanned concern that countries in Asia may not be able to pay back debt to Japan's already debt-strapped banks.

The dollar gained versus the mark amid concern that Russia

may not be able to pay back its loans to German banks. Russia's cash shortage grew more acute after the government failed Wednesday for a fifth week to sell enough Treasury securities at an auction to cover this week's maturing debt payments.

"Russia's problems are very big and won't be solved immediately," said Keisuke Aso, a manager of foreign exchange at Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Ltd. whose traders bought dollars today.

"That will have a bad effect on Germany," Russia's foreign exchange reserves, estimated at about \$10 billion in cash, are far less than Thailand, Indonesia or South Korea had on hand when their currencies first came under pressure last year. (Bloomberg)

Crude oil falls further

expected to open 1.5 cents to 2 cents higher from \$1.93 per million British thermal units on the Nymex. The American Gas Association said after trading yesterday that US natural gas inventories rose 86 billion cubic feet last week to 1.753 trillion cubic feet, which was close to expectations.

Precious metals

Palladium for September delivery fell as much as \$9.15 an ounce, or 3.6 percent, to \$255 an ounce on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Prices are falling on speculation that Russia, the world's biggest producer, is exporting the metal for the first time this year. Also, a weak yen is keeping demand low in Japan, one of the world's largest consumers. Russia hasn't officially exported any palladium this year because of

COMMODITIES

Gold \$289.95 +1.5%
Crude Oil \$13.35 +2.1%
CORN 211.03 +3.2%

Others

Corn for July delivery was called 1 cent to 2 cents a bushel higher on the Chicago Board of Trade from \$2.3175 on news of increasing export demand. The US Department of Agriculture said corn export sales last week were 852,700 tons, up from 792,200 tons the week before. US corn prices are down 15 percent over the past 12 months, making it the cheapest corn in the world, traders

said. Asian economies strapped by a currency crisis are able to step up purchases as well as Europe which needs it for livestock feed. July corn fell 0.25 cent, or 0.1 percent, to \$2.315 a bushel on the CBOT's after-hours trading system before the export news.

Hogs for July delivery were called to open as much as 0.20 cent lower on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange amid a rising supply of hogs and weakening demand from meatpackers. Hog farmers brought 127,000 hogs to market yesterday in Iowa, up from 100,000 a year earlier and 7,000 more than expected. That's a sign supplies are rising after meatpackers filled slaughterhouses to fill orders from retailers stocking up on pork products before Father's Day June 21 and the Fourth of July. July hogs fell 0.30 cent, or 0.5 percent, to 62.225 cents a pound on the CME. (Bloomberg)

US bonds rise; 30-year Treasury yield matches record low

US bonds rose yesterday, and 30-year yields briefly matched the record low reached in January, amid speculation Asia's slowdown will restrain US inflation and keep the Federal Reserve from raising interest rates soon.

The benchmark 30-year US bond rose 3/8, or \$3.75 per \$1,000 bond, to 106 13/32, pushing its yield down 3 basis points to 5.67 percent. Yields briefly fell to 5.66 percent, matching the lowest intraday yield since the government began regular sales of the bonds in 1977.

Bond yields fell 12 basis points in the last two days in a rally triggered by tumbling Asian stock

markets and the Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan's suggestion the central bank has little reason to raise interest rates, even though the economy is robust.

"There's tons of good news," said John Burgess, who oversees some \$90 billion at Bankers Trust Global Investment Management. "Asia, Greenspan, stocks, oil, the dollar - all of the above is positive for bonds right now."

Burgess predicts 30-year bond yields can fall to 5.5% in the weeks ahead.

Treasury Bonds "will definitely test 5.5%," said Rick Santelli, a trader at Sanwa Futures on the

BONDS

US 30-year T-bill yield 5.68 +1.05

floor of the Chicago Board of Trade

Investors looked past a report yesterday morning showing

stronger-than-expected May retail sales, encouraged by optimism Asia's slowdown will drag on US growth and keep inflation at bay in the months to come.

Inflation, which erodes bonds value over time, rose just 1.4% in the last 12 months, the slowest in more than a decade.

The Commerce Department said retail sales rose 0.9% in May, more than the 0.7% analysts expected, while sales increased 0.4% excluding autos.

"Everyone knows the retail sales story for May was a strong one," said Tony Crescenzi, chief bond strategist at Miller Tabak Hirsch &

Co. In congressional testimony Wednesday, Greenspan said that "the effects of the crisis in Asia will almost certainly damp net exports further, potentially moderating the growth of domestic production and hence employment."

The Fed last boosted the overnight bank lending rate in March 1997, by a quarter point to 5.5%.

Bonds also are getting a lift from a rising dollar, which surged to its highest level against the yen since September 1990, making investments in dollar-denominated securities attractive. (Bloomberg)

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Yassin: Is the sheikh a real threat?

And if he is, to whom? Would his return to Gaza mean a rise in terror – or is he about to pull the rug out from under Arafat's feet? Herb Keinon asks the experts

When Sheikh Ahmed Yassin was released from prison last October, various government spokesmen tried to allay a nation's fears by saying the 62-year-old blind, quadriplegic cleric was too old, sick and frail to present much of a threat to either Israel or the Palestinian Authority.

Indeed, one argument ran, it was actually good to be rid of Yassin, lest he die in Israel's hands, and all hell break loose as a result.

The last few months have shown just how old, sick and frail the cleric really is. One day he shows up in Kuwait and says: "The so-called peace path is not peace, and it is not a substitute for jihad and resistance."

The next day he is in Damascus declaring that "the first quarter of the next century will witness the elimination of the Zionist entity and the establishment of the Palestinian state over the whole of Palestine." And a few days later he is in Sudan singing the praises of Pakistan for detonating a nuclear device that "is to be considered an asset to the Arab and Moslem nations."

Yassin's regional tour would have done any rock star proud: three months, about a dozen countries, and a net of anywhere between \$50 and \$300 million, depending on who you ask.

Locally, the travels attracted the most attention on their final leg, when a decision – not as yet final – had to be made on whether Yassin should be allowed back into Gaza.

IN THE MEDIA coverage of this debate, a few points have been repeated so often that they have come to be accepted almost as fact: that it was idiotic to ever have released Yassin in the first place; that his Middle East tour was essentially a victory lap; and that Hamas's strength is growing by leaps and bounds, its influence in the Arab world increasing, and Yassin now posing a real challenge to Arafat.

But these facts have their detractors among analysts who study Hamas. One of those who doesn't buy into the conventional wisdom is Aziz Heidar, a sociologist at Al-Quds University in Jerusalem and a fellow at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Harry S. Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace.

Heidar, who has just completed a study in Arabic about Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the government's decision-making process that is slated for publication in Beirut, doesn't believe that the cabinet makes off-the-cuff decisions without thinking about their long-range implications.

In his mind it is a mistake to view Yassin's release, or even the approval of his tour abroad for medical treatment, as supreme acts of governmental bungling.

According to this view, which Heidar says is shared by a number of Palestinian academics, what may appear at first glance as hasty, poorly-thought-out decisions, are actually well-considered choices and part of a larger policy.

"I think Israel wants them [Hamas and the Palestinian

Authority] to fight each other. That would give Israel an excuse for not continuing with the peace process," Heidar says.

He predicts that Yassin's return would weaken PA Chairman Yasser Arafat, something he argues would be in Israel's interest.

"It is possible that, right now, Israel is interested in weakening Arafat, to show the US that he is not in control," says Heidar.

He doesn't think it was a matter of happenstance that Yassin was released as a result of the bungled hit on Khaled Masha'al in Jordan.

"It was not coincidental that Israel freed Yassin. Why precisely

Yassin's regional tour would have done any rock star proud: three months, a dozen countries, and a net of anywhere between \$50 and \$300 million, depending on who you ask

that gesture? I know the king asked for the release – but Israel could have given other things. If Israel felt that releasing Yassin would hurt Israel, they would not have done it," Heidar maintains.

MENACHEM Klein of Bar-Ilan University is not impressed in the least by the government's policy-making process. The way the government has dealt with the question of whether to allow Yassin to return to Gaza, Klein says, is an example of a penchant "to continuously bang its head against the wall, and be amazed when it hurts."

Klein also believes that the very thought of barring Yassin's reentry is an example of outdated thinking.

The debate about whether to permit Yassin back was primarily from an Israeli vantage point, without enough consideration given to how things look for the Palestinians. The Israeli parameters were security parameters: How do we control him, how do we prevent him from coming back?

"But these concepts belong to the past, not the present. They do not reflect the new reality since 1994," when the Palestinians became autonomous in Gaza under Arafat, says Klein.

"Yassin," says Klein, "is not in the palm of Israel's hand. Hamas doesn't work inside Israel – it is connected to the PA, it is in the Palestinians' court. The discourse should be about what is happening in the Palestinian domain."

"Once Israel indicated it might prevent Yassin from returning, Arafat could do nothing but say he wants him there," Klein continues.

"What should have been done was to talk to Arafat discreetly about how Yassin could be watched when he comes back, so he doesn't initiate terror. That is how things should work in the new reality."

"But because of the lack of cooperation and trust between the government and the PA the sides reverted to yesterday's concepts," Klein says.

"Look at what happened. We flexed our muscles; Hamas says it threatened terror and we gave in; Arafat is also saying he beat us. Everyone is saying they overcame the Israelis. And in the end, we gained absolutely nothing."

Klein's views are based on what appears to be a government decision to enable Yassin to return to Gaza. Klein, who is writing a book about how Israel and the PA deal with Hamas and Islamic Jihad, questioned whether Yassin's tour was an unmitigated success that showed his organization is growing in strength.

"I am not among those who see his trip as a victory trip," Klein says. "I look at the organization's situation over the last few months, and I don't see that it has enjoyed such great success."

Klein says that Hamas "has many serious problems. It has financial problems, which is the reason Yassin went abroad. It has internal division between doves and hawks. And it has operational problems. Arrests by the PA have damaged the organization's operational ability."

According to Klein, the killing of master bomb-maker Muhi Sharif in March is an indicator of the organization's problems, regardless of whether he was killed by Israelis or the PA, as Hamas claims, or as a result of an internal Hamas feud.

JOSHUA Teitelbaum, a researcher on both Palestinians and the Gulf States at Tel Aviv University's Dayan Center for Middle East Studies, says the warm welcome Yassin received in a number of Arab countries should not be interpreted as a sign that they have shifted their alliance from Arafat to Hamas.

The way they greeted Yassin, he says, indicates more about these countries' own problems with Islamic fundamentalism than it does about them supporting Yassin.

By showing support for Yassin, Teitelbaum says, Arab countries are throwing a bone in the direction of their own fundamentalists, at virtually no cost.

"It looks good for their internal population to be seen as support-

ing the Islamic cause," Teitelbaum says. "Saudi Arabia has its own problem with Islamic fundamentalists, so greeting Yassin is a cheap way of getting internal support. Believe me, these countries care more about internal politics than foreign policy."

Teitelbaum says that another element of the warm welcome Yassin received is that it may have been a way to "keep Arafat beholden to them."

Yassin's visit also gave the Gulf states another opportunity to express their residual displeasure with Arafat over his support for Iraq in the Gulf War.

Teitelbaum says it would be a misinterpretation to say that the Arab world views Yassin as a rightful rival, or heir, to Arafat.

Not only does the

Arab world not view Yassin as a serious rival to Arafat, neither do most Palestinians or even Hamas itself, says Reuven Paz, academic director of the Herzliya-based International Policy Institute for Counterterrorism, which is part of the Interdisciplinary Center.

Yassin's trip, Paz maintains, showed Palestinian society that he is not on the verge of death, which was

the perception, and that he has some alternatives to offer in response to the positions taken by Arafat.

But, Paz stresses, "Yassin's alternative is not to replace Arafat in office, but rather to show that

there is another way besides the peace process, that it is possible to continue dreaming about Greater Palestine, that it is not necessary to give the Jews half of Palestine as a present or even recognize the existence of Israel." Yassin, says Paz, represents a strong internal lobby against Arafat. Arafat is the symbol of the

On his release from prison last year, the cleric looked old, sick and frail: Now his power evokes awe and alarm. (IDF Spokesman's Office)

Palestinian revolution, and Yassin and Hamas are making no pretence of trying to replace him in that role.

Paz believes that Hamas is thinking about life after Arafat and trying to maneuver itself – with the help of frustration over the stalled process and economic distress – into a position of being able to have a say over who will succeed Arafat.

Yassin, says Paz, "dreams of a social revolution to return the majority of the population to Islam, a revolution that will force an Islamic state on Arafat. But that doesn't mean he has to lead it."



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Labor's frail 'coalition of outsiders'

Amir Peretz's runaway victory in the Histadrut elections bodes well for him, but not necessarily for his party, Larry Derfner reports

At a glance, it might seem that Amir Peretz has out-Bibed Bibi.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has the haredim, the working-class Sephardim and the Russians — his "coalition of outsiders" — Labor MK Peretz, elected Histadrut leader on Tuesday, has most of the working-class Sephardim, the Sephardi haredim and the Russians — plus any other Likudniks and half the Arabs — in his coalition.

One more thing — Netanyahu was elected with 50.5 percent of the vote, Peretz was elected with 77.7%.

But that's all at a glance. That's the way optimistic Labor supporters might interpret the political meaning of Peretz's victory in this week's Histadrut elections, in which he led an extraordinary coalition of Labor, Likud, Shas, Yisrael Ba'Aliya and the Arab Democratic Party. The loser was MK Maxim Levy, who headed the scarcely less extraordinary, but much narrower Geshet-Meretz coalition.

Labor leaders, especially MK Shlomo Ben-Ami, have been arguing that the party's electoral problem is that it's seen as the representative of the liberal, secular elite, and that it rides on one issue — the peace process. Israel's conservative majority — the working class, the Sephardim and Russians, and the religious — resent the party and its politicians, and this resentment is the main reason they vote automatically for Netanyahu and the Right, killing Labor's chances, the argument goes.

Well, hasn't Peretz broken through this wall of resentment? Now that Netanyahu's outsiders are sitting in a Histadrut coalition led by Labor — and including the

Arabs! — won't they now at least listen to opposition leader Ehud Barak? Hasn't Peretz finally given the Labor Party an entree to *amcha*, the working class?

"I wish that were the case, but it's not," said Ben-Ami. He said the victory was great for Peretz, since it made him the country's dominant social leader. And, he said, it was bad for the Likud because by running as Labor's junior partner instead of independently, it had abandoned any remaining pretense to speaking for the poor or the working class.

But that's as far as it goes, Ben-Ami said. "No new social alliance has been born here. This Histadrut coalition is skin-deep," he maintained.

Ben-Ami recalled being in Dimona for a campaign meeting and listening to all of Netanyahu's "outsiders" who were now supporting Peretz — Sephardim, Russians, religious, and Ashkenazi Likudniks. "Do you think any of them talked about unemployment, the recession, privatization? No, they talked about percentages — how big a piece of the pie they were going to get. This is a technical coalition only, a coalition without any soul, it doesn't penetrate into the grassroots," he said.

But might Barak be able to exploit Peretz's popularity by associating himself with the Histadrut chief? Instead of apologizing to the Sephardim, couldn't Barak simply bring Peretz along with him to Kiryat Shmona to get a sympathetic hearing? "Barak is trying. You see how he came to the victory party," said Ben-Ami. "But I don't think the election changes Barak's position. Do you think Shas came out to vote for Amir Peretz because they like



Pensioners, members of the large works committees, Arabs and kibbutzniks came out for the election, but 60% of Histadrut members didn't bother to vote. (Photos: Isaac Harari)

Barak? They voted for him because they want to get their share of the Histadrut budgets, of the old-age homes, of the Na'amat day-care centers. Same with Yisrael Ba'Aliya. Same with the Likud. What do they care about Barak?"

Dr. Yossi Dahan, a founder of the progressive Sephardi movement Keshet (Democratic Rainbow Coalition) noted that throughout the campaign, Peretz distanced himself from Labor and Barak. "The only time he asked Barak to get involved in the campaign was with the kibbutzim, so Barak went to the kibbutzim for him," noted Dahan, a fellow at Tel Aviv's Adva Center, a social democratic think tank.

Dahan agreed that the election has damaged the Likud, and has further weakened its link to working class, Sephardi and reli-

gious voters. But he noted that as Peretz has distanced himself from Labor, Netanyahu has distanced himself from the Likud, so he doubted that Israel's "outsiders" are ready to cut their ties

"If there's terror, or the second redeployment becomes a focal point, then everything that happened in the Histadrut election goes down the drain"

— Dr. Yossi Dahan, a founder of Keshet

with the prime minister. "If there's terror, or the second redeployment becomes a focal point, then everything that happened in the Histadrut election goes down the drain. If a national



Has Amir Peretz's victory given the Labor Party an entree into the working class? Not when it comes to national elections, say most experts.

Histadrut, so Yisrael Ba'Aliya joined Peretz's coalition," he said. When it comes to picking a prime minister, Russians like Netanyahu's "tough" stance towards the Arabs, Ladhinsky said; union coalitions and Amir Peretz won't even enter their minds when they vote.

The election raises two other key political questions:

Does it transform Peretz from a union leader into a "national" leader — someone with prime ministerial potential?

Does it resurrect the political career of Geshet leader David Levy, or effectively end it?

Political commentator Hanan Kristal compared Peretz with two other prominent Sephardi unionists — Labor's Yisrael Kessar, who ran the Histadrut in the 1980s, and David Levy, who entered politics via the union and was the Likud's strongest draw among workers.

"At this point I would put Peretz somewhere between Yisrael Kessar and David Levy," Kristal said. "Kessar turned out to be no more than a union leader, not a national leader.

Labor put him high on its Knesset list, and he didn't help at all.

David Levy, on the other hand, became a political leader of national stature. "Now if Barak were to go into Beit Shemesh with Kessar, nobody would applaud him," Kristal continued. "And if he goes into Beit Shemesh with Amir, they'll applaud. That's about the difference for now. We'll see whether Amir's going to become more than that as a political figure."

Kristal said he'd expected Maxim Levy to get at least 30%, not the mere 22.3% he got. The result, he said, hurt the standing of the Likud's brothers and sisters, he said, adding, "I would say they should reconsider whether they still want to operate as a separate party, or go back to the Likud."

Dahan took a different view, saying Peretz's victory strengthened his political future, not necessarily within the Labor Party, "but as the leader of an alternative party, a worker's party, which he has talked about possibly seating up. The election allows him to take that idea more seriously."

Surprisingly, Dahan said the election also strengthens David Levy. "Geshet accounted for half of Maxim Levy's vote — 11% — while the Likud only 11%," he said. "This means that David Levy did better than the Likud in the Histadrut, which is interesting."

But no one should rush to make too many political judgments from this race, Ben-Ami cautioned, because the most important percentage that came out of it was 60% — the proportion of voters who didn't even bother to vote. "Four groups came out to vote — pensioners, members of the large works committees, Arabs and kibbutzniks," he said. "The broad ranks of workers voted with their feet."

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Conversion crisis: A guide to the perplexed

Why did the conversion issue, which seemed to be dormant for the past few months, suddenly erupt again?

The issue erupted now because of the High Court of Justice's timetable. In March, the court ordered the state to give its substantive response by June 4 to one of several petitions and appeals currently in the judicial pipelines, calling on the interior minister to register non-Orthodox converts as Jews. The case in question involves a petition by the Conservative Movement and Na'amat, calling on the Interior Minister to register two adopted children who were converted in 1995 in a Conservative ceremony at Kibbutz Hanaton.

If the petition came up at this time according to the court's timetable, why did the haredi parties get so angry about it?

There are two reasons for the haredi reaction. For one thing, it was the Conservative movement and Na'amat who, several months ago, got the legal proceedings going again after they had been suspended for almost a year.

One of the conditions for establishing the Neeman Committee on June 17, 1997 was that both sides – the Conservative and Reform movements on the one hand, and the haredi parties on the other – agreed to suspend all legislative and legal steps while the committee was deliberating.

The Neeman Committee aimed to find a solution to the conversion issue acceptable to all sides. After receiving two deadline extensions, the committee completed its work on January 31, 1998, without its members signing the document. At that point, the Reform and Conservative movements regarded the moratorium as over.

The other, more fundamental reason, is that the haredim are certain, on the basis of previous High Court rulings, that this time the High Court of Justice will order the Interior Ministry to register the adopted children as Jews.

In 1995, the High Court made it clear that there is no law empowering the Interior Ministry to refuse to register non-Orthodox converts and that the religious definition of who is a Jew does not apply to the secular-national state.

Until now, the court has not gone so far as to actually order the Interior Ministry to register anyone who has converted to Judaism in a non-Orthodox ceremony in Israel. From now on, however, it almost certainly will.

Both sides claim that the other side is violating the status quo on the conversion issue. Which side is right?

Both, depending on which status quo one is talking about – the legal one or the one effectively in practice for many years. Until the 1980s, the Reform and Conservative movements did not try to force the interior minister to register its converts as Jews, so the matter was not tested. Thus, the unspoken status quo appeared to be that the interior minister did not register non-Orthodox converts. Some non-Orthodox observers claim that the Interior Ministry did in fact register converts during those years, but did so without a fuss, so that the issue did not reach the courts.

It should be added that in the 1970s, the Knesset passed an amendment to the Law of Return which defined a Jew as anyone who was born of a Jewish mother or had converted to Judaism. The amendment dropped the previous stipulation that the conversion be conducted by an Orthodox rabbi.

Be that as it may, in the mid-1980s, the Reform, and, subsequently, the Conservative movements, decided to launch a campaign to gain state recognition for their converts, and the rabbis who converted them. They did this in three stages, first fighting on behalf of immigrants who had converted abroad.

The most famous case was that of Susan Miller, an American-born Reform convert whom the Interior Ministry insisted on registering with a comment identifying her as a convert. Miller petitioned the High Court of Justice and won, forcing the ministry to erase the comment. In retaliation, the Interior Ministry decided not to register converts at all. This led to

It started with a battle over the fate of 12 adopted children. It may lead to a coalition crisis or a split between North American Jewry and Israel. Dan Izenberg looks at the conversion issue and leads readers through the maze of questions and answers.



another landmark petition involving more than a dozen immigrants who had converted abroad. The High Court ordered the ministry to register them.

In the next stage, the Reform Movement tested the right of a woman living in Israel who was converted abroad to be registered as a Jew here. It won an inconclusive victory. Then, in 1993, the Reform movement decided to take the big step. Hava Goldstein, an Israeli resident who studied Judaism under the aegis of the Reform Movement in Israel and converted here, petitioned the High Court to order the Interior Ministry to register her as a Jew. In 1995, the High Court of Justice accepted her petition and rejected the argument of the state, which had based its refusal on a mandatory law – the Religious Community Act Conversion, saying it did not apply to this case.

The court did not take the last step, that is, it did not order the Interior Ministry to register Goldstein. But Justice Aharon Barak said that there was no legal

vacuum in this matter and that if things remained as they were, it would have no choice but to order the Interior Ministry to register as Jewish the next non-Orthodox convert who demanded that.

"What the law has to say on this matter is to be found in the Law of Return which defines who is a Jew," wrote Barak. "If the Knesset does not add more to the existing legislation, the bench will have no choice but to rule in accordance with the existing definition."

What happened next?
The haredi parties decided to initiate an amendment to the Rabbinical Courts Jurisdiction (Marriage and Divorce) Law – 1953, clearly stating that only Orthodox conversions would be recognized. The legislation was their condition for joining Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government, and was included in the coalition agreement.

After months of delay, the government bill was presented to the Knesset for first reading on April

1, 1997. It stipulated that all conversions in Israel must be approved by the chief rabbi serving as president of the Supreme Rabbinical Court. But the impending vote on first reading caused a storm of controversy in Israel and throughout the Jewish world.

In Israel, many coalition MKs warned they would vote against the legislation. Abroad, Reform and Conservative rabbis and activists threatened to switch their donations from the Jewish Agency to Reform and Conservative institutions in Israel. Some went as far as to say they would wash their hands of Israel altogether.

By the time the law was brought to a vote in first reading, an understanding had been reached among the coalition parties that a last-ditch effort would be made to find a settlement based on consensus.

One of the key engineers of the understanding was MK Alex Lubotzky (Third Way). The agreement was to be reached by a seven-person committee headed

by Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman. It included five Orthodox figures and one representative each of the Reform and Conservative movements.

None of the Orthodox members directly represented the Chief Rabbinate. One of the key conditions for the committee's establishment was that the haredi parties promised to freeze the Knesset deliberations on the amendment, while the Reform and Conservative movements promised to suspend their litigation.

The conversion issue was not the only matter before the courts dividing the Orthodox and non-Orthodox streams. There were outstanding petitions on other issues, such as the question of whether Reform and Conservative Jews could serve on religious councils.

What happened to the Neeman Committee?

After seven months of intensive meetings, as often as three times a week, the Neeman Committee

drafted a proposal, according to which a special conversion college would be established including representatives of the three religious streams. The conversions would be conducted in Orthodox rabbinical courts established solely to deal with conversion requests. The court would adopt a liberal approach to the candidates for conversion. The committee's recommendations, however, were not finalized nor signed by its members.

Why weren't they signed?

The Conservative and Reform representatives, Rabbi Ehud Bandel and Rabbi Uri Regav, refused to sign on the grounds that the recommendations had not been accepted by the Chief Rabbis. Bandel and Regav maintained that without the cooperation of the Chief Rabbinate, the recommendations would remain a dead letter.

Neeman presented the recommendations of his committee to the rabbis in February. They accepted only that section deter-

mining that the act of conversion would be performed solely by Orthodox rabbis. As for the joint institution, the Chief Rabbis said: "The council of the Chief Rabbinate calls upon all who are able to prevent the deeds of those who do not believe in the Torah, given by God, and are trying to ruin the foundations of the Jewish religion, thus separating the people of the land of Israel and trying to divert them from the tradition that was handed down from generation to generation. They have already caused disastrous results and assimilation in the Diaspora Jewry. The sages of Israel forbade any cooperation with them and with their methods. It is inconceivable to establish a joint institute with them."

On February 11, in response to the Rabbi's decision, the Reform and Conservative representatives announced that they would not sign the Neeman Committee recommendations and would resume their litigation.

What is the significance of the Conservative and Na'amat petition?

In March, the High Court of Justice ordered the state to present its legal arguments for refusing to register the two children converted at Kibbutz Hanaton as Jews. The case has been dragging on for several years.

On seven previous occasions, the state had asked for, and received, deferrals. This time, the court insisted on a substantive answer by June 4. The haredi parties realized that unless they passed a new law, they would lose the case. Therefore, claiming that the Reform and Conservative movements had been the first to violate the Neeman Committee moratorium, they went to Netanyahu and insisted that the Knesset give final approval to the amendment to the Rabbinical Courts Law which had been passed in first reading on April 1, 1997.

The petition, however, may soon disintegrate. Only two families are left of the original 12 who petitioned the High Court. The others have found their own solutions in the meantime. Of the remaining two, one family left Israel and the child of the other may soon convert in an Orthodox ceremony.

Even if that happens, however, the conversion issue will not go away. There are two other conversion cases before the High Court – one involving an adopted baby converted in a Reform ceremony and the other involving a Croatian refugee given asylum in Israel – and another case in Jerusalem District Court involving 25 Israeli citizens or residents, most of whom studied Judaism here and underwent conversion either here or abroad. It is only a matter of time before the court will have to make a decision on one of them.

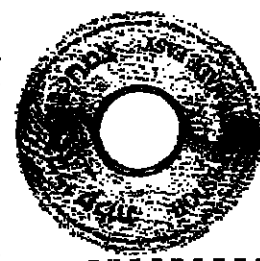
What is the government doing to solve the crisis?

At first, Netanyahu and Neeman seemed to wholeheartedly back the haredi position. They accused the Reform and Conservative movements of violating last year's agreement to suspend all legal and court action and supported the haredi demand to resume the legislation process. But by the following day, Netanyahu realized that he did not have a Knesset majority to pass the law. At least three coalition groups – Tsomet, the Third Way and Yisrael Ba'Aliya – said they would vote against it.

In an attempt to find a middle path, the Justice Ministry drafted a new version of the amendment which incorporates the Neeman Committee recommendations – including the establishment of an institute for Jewish studies and the stipulation that conversions be conducted solely by Orthodox rabbis and approved by the Chief Rabbinate. It is not clear whether the government can muster enough votes to pass this bill, which is strongly opposed by Reform and Conservative leaders.

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A first step to repentance

The Vatican statement on the Holocaust was a big disappointment to Jews because it failed to address both the church's historic role in anti-Semitism and the part played by Pope Pius XII during World War II.

During a symposium last week at Yad Vashem on the document, called "We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah" and issued by the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations with Jews on March 16, Geoffrey Wigoder said it was "an effort to cleanse the church of past sins (by stating that) things that happened were not the direct responsibility of an innocent and pure church, but of specific people."

The document failed to address the church's history of anti-Semitism through the generations, continued Wigoder, who is a member of the committee dealing with the Vatican. Instead, it "blurred the church's function and its actions during the Holocaust."

"It was as if they were evading the issue, [implying that] anti-Semitism during the Nazi period was a sort of pagan anti-Semitism. They are trying to evade responsibility."

Wigoder also pointed to an asymmetry in the way the document tried to balance an equation.

"It talks about Christian criminals during the Holocaust, then about Righteous Gentiles. You can't balance what [the former] did against what the others did."

Izhak Minerbi, a senior lecturer at the Institute of Contemporary Judaism at Hebrew University and author of a book on the Vatican, agreed.

"When the document says a new future must be shaped, one in which there will no longer be any anti-Judaism on the part of the Christians or anti-Christian sentiment among Jews, I don't understand. The symmetry simply isn't there."

"Take, on the one hand, the centuries of persecution of Jews by the Christian authorities, the church authorities. On the other, you don't find centuries - in fact, far less, hardly anything - done by Jewish authorities against Christians."

"This parallelism, this symmetry they are striving to maintain on all occasions, at any cost -

While the Vatican statement on the Holocaust falls far short of recognizing the church's direct link to the persecution and murder of Jews, it is an important tool for combating antisemitism, **Elli Wohlgelemer** learned at a recent symposium

and not only in this document - seems inappropriate."

MODERATOR Yehuda Bauer, head of Yad Vashem's International Center for Holocaust Studies, termed the implication that anti-Semitism during the Nazi period was a kind of pagan aberration "an easy way out."

"The fact is," Bauer observed, "that 1,900 years after the advent of the Christian messiah, his people were murdered by other people who had undergone Christian baptism."

"Hitler, Himmler and Goebbels have not been excommunicated from the Christian Church to this day

— Yehuda Bauer

Gutman noted, that arose out of a very deep and positive attitude toward the German people.

"It was a political perception, not an ethical or spiritual one," he said. "Pius XII saw Bolshevism in the USSR as his arch enemy in the modern world. He was absolutely certain that there would be a modern Europe later on - and that there would be a place for the Nazis in it. He truly believed that."

Moreover, Gutman said, "during all the years of the war and the Shoah, Pius XII never mentioned the words 'Jew' or 'Judaism.'"

WIGODER wasn't surprised by the document's treatment of Pius XII, because "no pope can actually come out and condemn a previous pope: it's such a sensitive issue."

"It's understandable - though [the document's authors] did exaggerate a bit in saying that the pope saved hundreds of thousands of Jews. But I don't expect them to come out with anything else in the Vatican. They can't."

Minerbi said he hadn't expected any church condemnation of Pius XII either, but added that he "thought some reference might have been made to his silence at the time."

It would have been one thing, Minerbi said, had the document

not referred to Pius XII at all; but it didn't only mention him, "it defended him and turned him above all into an ideologist in the fight against racism through his first encyclical; then it portrayed him as someone who saved hundreds of thousands of Jews."

Gutman agreed. "He did save many thousands through the back door - but he abandoned Jews as well. He could have saved hundreds of thousands."

Bauer noted that while the document "is a statement of repentance, it doesn't actually say 'We repent.' There is a difference, he stressed - a fine distinction, but an important one."

"This is not the end of repentance," the historian mused, "but it may be the beginning."

"There's the need to say, 'We made a mistake.' If you don't say it in so many words, you're basically saying: 'We didn't make any mistake.'"

YET ALL the panelists agreed that there was a positive side to the document.

Wigoder noted that although Catholic bishops in other countries had issued stronger statements about the Holocaust, the document in question was important because of "the very clear, unequivocal condemnation of anti-Semitism that does appear. It is very important ammunition against those who are denying the Holocaust."

Further, the document's stress on the significance of the Holocaust is a genuinely positive feature, according to Minerbi, because of the political ramifications.

Emphasis on the importance of the Holocaust is a response to those who say, "We don't have to talk about the Shoah any more because the State of Israel is abusing its memory, using it as an 'alibi' to cover up brutal acts vis-a-vis the Arabs."

Importance also lay, Minerbi said, in the fact that this was an internal church document, "a response to those who believe in the church as an ethical and moral church, one which might have behaved in an unethical and immoral fashion during the Shoah period. It's supposed to provide a response to their questions."

Wigoder suggested that, although the document was a disappointment to Jews, "maybe it's precisely because of our hopes



Pope Pius XII: The Vatican statement depicted him as an ideologist in the fight against racism, but "during all the years of the war and the Shoah, he never mentioned the words 'Jew' or 'Judaism,'" said historian Yisrael Gutman.

and expectations that we need to recognize its positive side. "Here, from the lofty heights of

the Vatican, comes a true cessant, very stringent and severe, against anti-Semitism - one we hope that

Catholics everywhere will hear, even in places in the Third World where there aren't any Jews."

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Round Table

The United States and Israel: Towards the Next Jubilee

- 8:30 - Registration
- 8:50 - Opening Remarks
Prof. Avishay Braverman, President, Ben-Gurion University
Dr. Dror Ze'evi, Chair, The Chaim Herzog Center
- 9:00 - The Public, Its Representatives and the Media
Prof. Alon Gai, History Department, Ben-Gurion University
Zvi Rafiah, Consultant on American-Israeli Affairs
Ruth Yaron, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 10:30 - Redeployment or Reassessment
Dr. Uri Arad, Foreign Policy Adviser to the Prime-Minister
- 11:15 - The United States and Israel: Aspects of National Security
MK Ehud Barak
- 12:00 - Strategic Cooperation and Economic Assistance
Chair: Dr. Zvi Shatzman, Vice-President, BGU
Major General (Ret.) Giora Ron, Former Defense Attaché, Washington
Dan Halperin, Former Minister for Economic Affairs, Israeli Embassy, Washington
- 13:20 - Break for Lunch
- 14:00 - Diplomatic Coordination During Military Crises
Simcha Diniz, Former Ambassador to the United States
Prof. Kenneth W. Stein, Director, Middle East Research Program, Emory University, Atlanta
Amos Eran, Former Director General of the Prime Minister's Office
- 15:30 - U.S.-Israeli Relations: Past and Future
Edward Walker, Jr., U.S. Ambassador to Israel

Facilitator: Amir Oren, Ha'aretz

For invitations please call the Center: 07-6472538

Monday, June 15, 1998, Zlotowski Student Center
Ben-Gurion University, Beer-Sheva

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**Arriving in Cyprus:**

One of the "winter camps" in Cyprus, 1946: In an ironic full turn of a historic circle, Holocaust survivors find themselves behind barbed wire once more.

**Palestine bound:**

Young people on their way to Palestine from a Cyprus camp, 1948 – a permanent home at last?

(Palestine Post Photo)

Cyprus hellholes on the eve of independence

50

Aphrodite's Island of Cyprus lies stretched like an animal skin pinned out to dry in the east Mediterranean sun, an ancient historian observed. Maybe so, but it is a skin that has been used as a doormat by an ebb and flow of races throughout its long history.

"The island has been the meeting place of Aryan and Semite, of West and East, of Egypt and Asia, of Christian and Moslem," wrote British historian Rupert Gunnis in the 1930s.

It is a hospitable place of warm-hearted people, a favorite holiday destination for Israelis, as for the many other nations of Europe. Fifty years ago, it was not so hospitable to Jews – but that was not the fault of the Cypriots, for they too shared the same oppressor, pinned down in the Mediterranean sun by the British Empire.

This week Israelis and Diaspora Jews traveled to the island to remember the Jews of Cyprus – not its residents, but its unwilling captives of British authorities, who forcefully denied them the right to follow the Zionist dream.

They were *ma'aplim* – those making an "arduous ascent" to Zion. In their crowded and battered old ships they fled the ruins of European Jewry, only to be rounded up again and dumped in colonial internment camps in Cyprus.

The Keren Hayesod arranged, as a jubilee event tied to its annual conference, the first ever commemoration of the internment of the Zionist pioneers, and paid tribute to gallant Cypriots who helped them, with the raising of a plaque to the *Ha'apala* era at the harbor in Larnaca yesterday.

"We are here on Israel's 50th anniversary to commemorate a small short chapter in the history of the Jewish people – the detention camps of Cyprus," Baruch Gur, director general of Keren Hayesod, told waiting Cyprus media at Paphos airport when his group arrived. Gur himself was born on a refugee ship making the run through the British blockade on Palestine before independence.

"We also want to thank an old Cypriot friend, Prodromos Pappavissiliou, who 50 years ago was involved with the detention camps and the Jewish underground and who is remembered in Israel as one of the small, unknown heroes who helped our war for independence."

Pappavissiliou, a former volunteer in British North African forces, befriended Jewish soldiers during his service and later, as a businessman, provided a philanthropic front for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee to aid the interned refugees in his native Cyprus. He has for years headed the Cyprus-Israel Friendship Society.

Pappavissiliou was present, along with the Cyprus Minister of Tourism and Commerce, Nikos Rolandis, at the unveiling of a plaque to commemorate the camps yesterday.

"This is closing a circle in Jewish history," Gur told more than 100 visiting Jewish leaders at a dinner in Tel Aviv before they left for Cyprus.

The history of the *Ha'apala* dates back to 1934, said Dr. Aviva Halamish of Tel Aviv University's department of Jewish history and author of the newly published *The Exodus Affair*. The movement to bring Jews to Palestine gathered momentum as their plight in Germany worsened. At the same time British restrictions on immigration increased.

"As war expanded, the effort declined, but the early infrastructure [of contacts, routes, shipping sources, sympathizers, and other organization] was never entirely lost," said Halamish. It was quickly reactivated when the Nazis were crushed.

At first, "illegal" Jewish immigrants (IJs) to Mandatory Palestine were intercepted by the British Navy and interned in Adit and released only in a trickle of tight quotas that had to be certified.

On August 8, 1946, the British government announced that these wretched detainees would no longer be held at Adit. They would be interned in the nearby colony of Cyprus.

"Instructions have been given ... that the reception into Palestine of illegal immigrants must cease."

Only two days later *The Cyprus Mail* reported full details of internment camps going up near the village of Karaolos in the central plain "400 meters from the sea and 1.6 kms. from the ancient walls of Famagusta."

The Mail got the story despite a strict ban on reporters in the area. "Approximately 200 Cypriots are

This week former internees joined workers from the illegal Jewish immigrant camps in Cyprus on a jubilee journey of remembrance, Thomas O'Dwyer reports

**The camps in Cyprus:**

The face of desolation and abandonment: Two refugee children wonder what is to become of them.

(Cornelius Ryan)

working on the camps and they managed to set up some 200 tents each with a capacity for 8-12 persons. The camp is fenced in ... Around the perimeter are eight seven-meter-high watchtowers.

These were the first IJCs, Illegal Jewish Immigrant Camps. It was an ironic full turn of an historic circle. The British invented the concentration camp during the Boer war. The concept was hideously refined by the Nazis, and now many thousands of Holocaust survivors found themselves once again behind barbed wire. British barbed wire. However unjust,

insensitive or unpleasant the British Cyprus camps were in concept and in operation, these were refugee holding camps, and nothing more sinister. But they were no holiday camps either.

"There was strict discipline regarding escapes," said Emanuel Gutmann, a former Hebrew University professor who worked as an emissary of the Joint in the Cyprus camps. "People were sentenced to long terms in Cypriot jails for trying to tunnel out – although all of them were freed when the camps closed in 1949."

The Royal Navy and British Army traced and hunted the IJs at sea and on land. The first expulsion to Cyprus was on August 13, 1946 – 1,290 "illegals" from the ships *Yagur* and *Henrietta Seld*, including 200 children. After

futile passive resistance on the *Yagur* and club-wielding on the *Henrietta*, the refugees were put on the *Empire Rival* for the 16-hour journey to Cyprus.

Sometimes interception or attempted disembarkation led to fierce resistance by the refugees and the British responded with clubs, high-pressure hoses, tear gas or gunfire.

"Eleven *ma'aplim* and one American volunteer were killed," said Halamish.

There were heartbreaking scenes of refugees who had made the long and dangerous passage from

Holocaust ruins to the Haifa port only to be rounded up and sent to camps in Cyprus.

"Some people became hysterical after coming from camps in Europe when they saw that they were going back into a camp," said Gutman. "It really was terrible. One British officer, a Major Maitland, was so sickened and ashamed to his heart of the camps that he wrecked his career doing absolutely everything he could to help the refugees."

Between August 1946 and May 1948, 52,000 people from 40 ships were forcibly sent to Cyprus. Under the British quota system about 1,500 certified immigrants were allowed into Palestine per month. About 2,000 children were born in the camps, which remained in operation until February 1949.

When the State of Israel was declared, there were still 25,000 people in the camps. The British army set up 12 detention camps, divided into three administrative groups, in the first year. A second group of camps was later established at Dhekelia, on the side of the Famagusta-Larnaca highway. (Dhekelia region is still British sovereign territory today. The Turkish army occupies Famagusta.)

"I was myself an ex-soldier and I could not believe the British army would ever, ever intern free people," Pappavissiliou told *The Jerusalem Post*.

"The only, but the biggest help we Cypriots could give the refugees was sympathy. We were all very sorry when the camps were built. Here were the British liberators from the war against the Nazis building camps for the Nazis victims. We protested when they were built, we protested when they were opened, we protested when the first Jews arrived, we celebrated when they closed."

Pappavissiliou said some sympathy came from the joint struggle by the Zionists and Cypriots against British rule. "But it was mainly just the human element. How could they do this to these poor people after all they had been through? They just wanted to go home, to make it to their country."

On arriving at a camp, the hapless refugee was issued three army blankets, a pillowcase (to be filled with straw), eating irons, a towel, a comb, and a toothbrush. There was a cursory medical check and security questioning. In the tent, or more rarely the hut, there was one army field bed per person, nothing else. This was home. There was no privacy.

Water in those days was a scarce

commodity in summer, even for Cypriots. In the camps, shortage was constant. Tanker trucks delivered daily supplies, but the two gallons per person per day was never enough.

Food too was meager and boring, but adequate. It was distributed on a calculated ratio of calories per head, with women and children getting higher values.

Tensions often ran high, Gutman said, though he praised the self-discipline of the internees, as well as the help of the dozens of Zionist agencies working to alleviate the conditions and crushing boredom of camp idleness.

"It's not well known," he said, "but there was terrible animosity at times toward the few hundred internees from North Africa. And no one ever mentions it, but there were at least two murders in the camps."

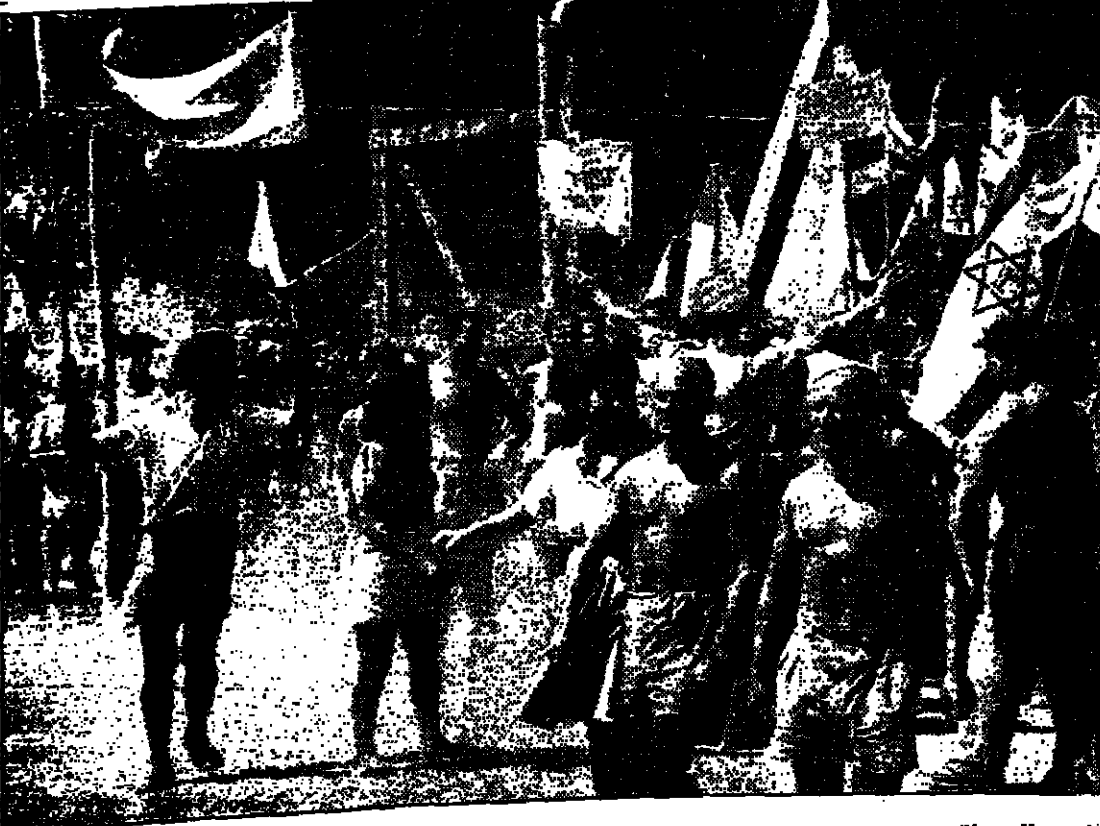
About 120 in all died during the years of internment, mostly newborns, former residents say. Gutmann himself and members of the Joint were forced to flee the camps when trouble erupted in 1948 over a misunderstanding about different feeding arrangements for volunteers of the Joint and inmates.

Tension was high at the time because although the State of Israel had been proclaimed, the British continued to enforce a UN embargo on "arms and fighting men" entering the country, so the camps remained in operation until 1949 in an effort to keep those aged between 15 and 50 in detention. Several younger men got out to Israel by disguising themselves as old men, Gutmann said.

There were some lighter stories – despite a ratio of two-thirds women to men, many couples met and then married in the camps. Gutmann and his wife Nehama met while working for the Joint there. Today they have three daughters and eight grandchildren, the oldest of whom is in the IDF.

With the passage of years, and despite the romances and births of children, there is no nostalgia for camp life. The former detainees consider Cyprus camps as another cruel twist on the road to Jewish freedom and Israeli statehood. They were also a thoroughly shameful act perpetrated by a British nation that had won so much Jewish admiration for its valiant fight against Nazism, only to squander it in the grimy tents and huts of Karaolos and Dhekelia.

"Do you have any good memories of those days helping the detained Jews?" I asked Pappavissiliou. He laughed harshly. "Yes. When the camps closed."



Many couples met and then married in the camps.

(Keren Hayesod)

With the passage of years, and despite the romances and births of children, there is no nostalgia for camp life.

The former detainees consider Cyprus camps as another cruel twist on the road to Jewish freedom and Israeli statehood



Immigrants being lorried to a Cyprus camp: Escape attempts were harshly punished. (Sh. Guebenlian)

Cellcom – call it a ringing success

A few weeks after Ya'acov Perry ended his 28 years in the General Security Services and launched his new career in the private sector in April 1995, his new company hit a crisis that would be any chief executive officer's worst nightmare.

Due to circumstances beyond its control, Cellcom found its service in chaos after a programming error caused havoc with tens of thousands of Motorola phones it had sold to a cellular-hungry public.

Enlisting his nerves of steel and ability to cope with a crisis – both well honed in the GSS – the Cellcom president and CEO didn't try to deny or cover up the problem. After Motorola engineers in the US finally managed to isolate the software protocol error in the phones it had sent to Israel, Cellcom stopped selling and charging subscribers for airtime for three painful months. It sent 550 staffers to Yad Elihu stadium and the Tel Aviv Fairgrounds to calm subscribers and change the phones' defective software.

Cellcom's relationship with Motorola – ironically a partner with Bezeq in Pelephone – was so shaken that only now is it planning to sell some new Motorola models, the M70 and M75.

"Cellcom's reputation was severely damaged," Perry recalls. "It took two years to overcome the crisis."

But overcome it it has. Cellcom now claims 950,000 subscribers and users, capturing 54 percent of the market and leaving the rest to its much more senior competitor Pelephone.

Cellcom customers include users of Talkman phones, which require no registration or monthly service fee. Users purchase pre-paid cards with codes to finance calls. After Partner, the third cellular phone service provider, opens its doors this fall, Perry expects that Cellcom will eventually hold a healthy 40% of the ever-growing pie.

If 33% of the Israeli public carry a cellular phone today, experts estimate that this could grow to 50% in the year 2001 and 60% a few years after that.

"It's complete madness," Perry admits in a rare, off-guard moment during a meeting with *The Jerusalem Post's* editorial board this week. "But it's good for business."

There's quite a difference between Perry's previous job as GSS director (appointed by then-prime minister Yitzhak Shamir) and his present position at Cellcom's

helm. "Before, I was busy saving lives; now I'm busy making money – always with my eye on the bottom line."

A consortium owned by BellSouth (Atlanta), the Safra Brothers and Discount Investments, Cellcom has made a lot of money despite its initial setback. It had its first profitable year in 1997, registering a NIS 281 million net profit, compared with a loss of NIS 45m.



Perry takes the cake: 'Cellular phones have changed our culture.'

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The company also boosted the number of its subscribers last year by 65%, doubling gross revenues to NIS 2.1 billion. The young company now has 1,500 employees, with an average age of around 27, plus 350 independent equipment dealers and some 3,000 suppliers.

The consortium has invested \$800 million in the company since 1995, and the firm is ahead of its

business plan in terms of subscribers and profits, by an incredible five to eight years.

FOR YEARS after Pelephone introduced an elite group of Israelis to cellular phones in the mid-Eighties, walking around with one of the then-bulky handsets was the ultimate in status symbols, only within the reach of fat-cat businessmen and senior government officials.

The have-nots stared at the haves with jealousy and awe, and many still believed that the technology was the stuff of science fiction. But Cellcom became the Subaru of cellular services, giving middle- and lower-income sectors a grab at being constantly in touch, just as the Japanese car company brought a 1,600 cc. engine, family-sized car within the reach of these people in the early Eighties.

Cellular phones have "changed our culture," Perry declares, although he admits that it has not always been for the good. There are 1.8 million cell phone users in this country, and many still don't know when to turn them off, such as at a concert, and even a funeral. "But the situation has improved," he says.

The benefits, however, greatly outweigh the disadvantages, says Perry.

"It has created great mobility. Workers in every type of profession no longer have to be physically in the office to know what's going on. People feel more secure about themselves and about their families when they can call to find out where others are. When a terror attack strikes, tens of thousands of people call their loved ones to make sure they're safe."

"Parents buy cellular phones for children who are soldiers, teenagers – even kids in elementary school – so they can locate them easily. But that immediate accessibility is part of the downside: You can't separate home from the workplace; you have to be available constantly to people who need or want you."

Cellular phone service has greatly benefited Palestinians in the autonomous areas, adds Perry, who was a field officer for the Arab sector when recruited by the GSS in 1966.

He served in Samaria after the Six Day War.

The backwardness of regular telecommunications infrastructure in their areas have led Palestinians and Israeli Arabs to rush to buy cellular phones. Cellcom has put up 50 cell sites (transmission stations) in Judea and Samaria alone. Cellcom's

"771 service speaks Arabic. The Palestinian Authority says it intends to establish its own cellular phone company, but, in the meantime, Cellcom and Pelephone are only gaining."

The company has sought to lure other sectors as well, notably the religious and especially the haredi sector, which might be regarded as a conservative and lower-income consumer group. With this population in mind, Cellcom recently established its "613 service, which provides information about prayer times, daily Talmud portions for study and other events on the Jewish calendar."

HOW DOES Cellcom intend to remain ahead of its competitors? It will offer EFRC, a system developed by Northern Telecom offering high-quality voice recording. Its most "sensational" new product will be the NIS 2,000 Nokia 6120 model.

Due to be introduced very soon, it fits in the palm of the hand and weighs just 100 grams. Its built-in battery stores enough power for up to three hours of conversation and eight hours of standby between rechargings. Its digital screen includes a watch, games and an electronic diary. Existing Cellcom customers, says Perry, will be able to upgrade to the new Nokia by trade-in.

The company has also signed a contract with MailPush, which allows users to field their e-mail messages as written data on the phone's screen. To those who groan that they get tons of e-mail, Perry answers that users can state specifically whose messages they want to receive.

Cellcom users can also avoid having to give people separate phone numbers for home and work in addition to their cellular number. Those who dial a subscriber's Cellcom master number can automatically be routed to the other numbers to locate the person they want. The subscriber can program the system daily when he knows his exact schedule, and the intelligent network will dial where he is supposed to be first, going on to the other numbers if he isn't there.

In two months Cellcom will be unveiling a car phone system with voice recognition, Perry points out that, unlike Pelephone's system, the innovation doesn't require even the push of a button to dial or answer a

call, just a key word. And users will be able to know who's calling before responding, thus avoiding unwelcome calls.

Another service the Israel Police and other authorities and businesses are sure to be enthusiastic about is CDPD, which provides written data on the phone screen. A cop stops a car – and can immediately check a violator's driving record with the License Bureau, the Health Ministry and the police archives.

Perry opposes the gimmick, used in some countries, of giving subscribers their cellular phones free, charging only for use. "It deals a deadly blow to consumer loyalty," he says. "People wouldn't value the product, because it would be free."

IS THERE a snake in this technological Garden of Eden? If there is, its name might be health risk.

Because cellular phones have been in use for a relatively short time, no one – not even the amiable Perry – can guarantee that they're absolutely safe.

A number of foreign studies suggest that electromagnetic fields (EMF) issued by cellular phone handsets and the large transmission antennas could be harmful. An Australian study found that mice kept close to functioning cellular phones had a higher rate of brain tumors and other cancers than those that were not.

The World Health Organization sponsored a scientific meeting in Moscow a few weeks ago to discuss the adverse health effects of EMF. The main conclusion was that there must be more and more serious research over a prolonged period so authorities can be sure of what the risks are.

Closer to home, yesterday the Organization of Electrical and Electronics Engineers held a symposium in Tel Aviv on the health implications of cellular phones.

Cellular phone use is forbidden in aircraft, and in intensive-care units and other sections of hospitals where they may interfere with sensitive electronic equipment. Those with implanted pacemakers should keep cellular phones 20-30 centimeters from their chests.

Perry's smile melts when the health issue is raised; the specter of risk scares all cellular phone companies. "There has been no proof of any harm," he stresses. "Our equipment meets the strictest European and US limits. A lawsuit in the US by a woman whose husband died

of a brain tumor was thrown out as baseless."

But some subscribers who have complained about hot spots near their ears, headaches, and even confusion after holding a cellular phone to their heads for 10 or 30 minutes at a time may not be persuaded.

The Knesset Science and Technology Committee recently dedicated a session to discussing the possible health dangers of cellular phone handsets and antennas. It demanded that the two existing providers finance an Israeli research fund to investigate the question – given the fact that Israelis spend up to three times as many minutes speaking over these phones as their counterparts in other countries, buying them even for young children.

So far, however, nothing has happened. Perry says Cellcom would be happy to match Pelephone if a \$1 million research fund were established; if the amount was much larger, it would want to pay a third, along with Pelephone and Partner.

Reluctant to call attention to the health issue, Cellcom hasn't promoted the sale of a personal car-phone device called *diburit ishit*, which hooks up to the bottom of a cellular phone, allowing the user to converse from up to a meter away from the handset.

The WHO has stated that "for a person at 30 centimeters from a transmitting handset, radio frequency (RF) absorption is 100 times less than that typically absorbed by the handset user." The amount of RF absorbed decreases rapidly at greater distances from the handset.

Cellcom sells the item – a thin wire, tiny microphone and earphone – for NIS 300; some argue it should be much cheaper and included in every box when a cellular phone is sold.

Perry promises to look into the idea. "The Science Committee whipped up hysteria," he frowns. "When TV's Dan Margalit interviews a woman whose child has died of cancer and claims it was caused by their living across the street from a cellular phone antenna, it's difficult to erase the shocking impression that makes."

It's a catch-22 situation. Israelis don't want transmitting stations near them – but they complain loudly if they can't hear phone conversations because there aren't enough stations.



Avigdor Kahalani embraces Naomi Shemer, as Yurik Ben-David looks on.

GRAPEVINE

BY GREER FAY CASHMAN

DURING the Tiffany Jerusalem launch at the new Jerusalem Hilton, someone quipped that the smoked salmon cost more than the jewels worn by the models. The huge platters were replenished as the champagne flowed till the barmen ran out of stemware. Millionaires from the capital and the coastal plain filled the reception area, despite competition from the Israel Festival. Among them were Sima and Shlomo Danahy, who own the Harel shopping mall, have the Israel franchises for Pizza Hut and Kentucky Fried Chicken, and are about to open Rav Shefa, the country's first haredi shopping mall. Also on hand were real estate developer Alfred Rejwan and his wife, Maggie, as well as Batsheva Kookai, whose family owns a very large slice of downtown Jerusalem.

Knowing that everyone who was anyone would be there, fashion designer Shoshana Ben-Zur came with invitations for her upcoming show for WIZO, while Etti Silansky distributed invitations for the B'nai B'rith Moriah chapter. They weren't the only ones saving on stamps.

Tiffany vice-chairman James Quinn, in Israel for the first time, brought black dresses like the one worn by Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, but didn't take into account the slender figures of Israeli models. The gowns were much too large, but jewelry designer Chana Regev, the director of Amirel, which has the Tiffany Israel franchise, came to the rescue with large diamond pins which held the dresses together in the back.

THE WORDS "Schindler's list" don't always evoke the award-winning Spielberg film, Harris Gulkow, outgoing president of the board of the Moshesh Israel congregation, implied at a gala dinner honoring Rabbi Dr. Pesach Schindler, who is retiring from his position of director of the Center for Conservative Judaism, which he founded in Jerusalem 26 years ago. Gulkow, and others attending the dinner at the Hyatt Regency hotel lauded Schindler as a great teacher

and a man of extraordinary sensitivity and compassion who has served the Conservative Movement for 33 years. Reaching retirement age will not remove Schindler from the scene. In fact, he's going on to greater things as the new head of the Conservative Yeshiva.

ALTHOUGH his negotiations to buy a large stake in Ma'ariv fell through, it's possible that American cosmetics and communications tycoon Ronald Lauder may be spending his money in a different arena. According to the Hebrew media, Lauder is being courted by Ehud Olmert to acquire the victi-

ous but financially strapped Beitar soccer team. As yet, Lauder hasn't said yes. But he hasn't said no, either.

WHEN Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani met with leading members of ACUM, the society of composers, musicians, writers and publishers, he was invited to become a member. Kahalani qualifies on the basis that he's written two books and a song. But that's not the only reason ACUM would welcome his presence. Chairman Yurik Ben-David and director Ran Kedari, along with Hed Artzi general manager Michael Tunis and other interested parties, are trying to persuade Kahalani to set up a special police task force to crack down on piracy. Kahalani made a pledge to Naomi Shemer, the nation's greatest songwriting luminary, that he would try to put a stop to this kind of theft.

THEY SAY that if you want something done, you'd better get a busy person to do it. Ben-Gurion University's David Newman, at 41 one of the country's youngest professors, is fitting yet another job into his hectic schedule. Newman, a political geographer who for the last three years has run the university's Humphrey Institute for Social Research and was recently appointed editor of the prestigious international journal *Geopolitics and International Boundaries*, is to set up Ben-Gurion's new department of politics and government, focusing on issues of democracy, governance and civil society.

"It's just one more step in the dynamic academic debate going on at the university, which in the last few years has attracted a large group of socially critical scholars," said Newman, an ex-Londoner who came here in 1982 and contributes a weekly op-ed column to *The Jerusalem Post*.

PULITZER Prize-winning author Herman Wouk, who last week received the second annual Guardian of Zion Award from Bar-Ilan University's Ingelborg Rennert Center for Jerusalem Studies, recalled that when he first visited Israel in 1955, his Ashkenazi-accented Hebrew was so obvious that people said he sounded like "a figure from the Bible." Wouk told his audience at the new Jerusalem Hilton that "I understood this wasn't a compliment."

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Sarah, to a fancy hotel restaurant for *paré de foie gras*, but Agnon – a very modest man – insisted on pulling out a can of sardines and cooking some eggs as he described the Nobel Prize ceremony in Stockholm.

NO SOONER has he gotten used to being a father again with the arrival of baby Yovel than Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai has to accustom himself to the role of father of the bride. His daughter Segit, a product of his first marriage, is planning a July wedding.

ALSO in the fatherhood stakes is Shmuel Slavin, former director-general of the Finance Ministry. He and his wife, Tali, are welcoming a new arrival toward the end of summer. Slavin has just started a new job in real estate.

LONG devoted to voluntary work on behalf of children with hearing problems, Remma Weizman, wife of the president and chairperson of Michal, which provides therapy and education for deaf and partially deaf children, has joined a project aimed at the early detection and management of hearing impairments in infants and children in the region.

The program grew out of a conference which took place recently at Schneider Children's Medical Center with the participation of Jordanian, Palestinian, Israeli and Canadian specialists.

The high-level Jordanian delegation, led by Dr. Youssef Goussous, the Jordanian surgeon-general and personal physician to King Hussein, and Dr. Adel Shureideh, director of the King Hussein Medical Center in Jordan, visited a Michal facility and invited Weizman to a continuing conference in Jordan.

ALTHOUGH his negotiations to buy a large stake in Ma'ariv fell through, it's possible that American cosmetics and communications tycoon Ronald Lauder may be spending his money in a different arena. According to the Hebrew media, Lauder is being courted by Ehud Olmert to acquire the victi-

ous but financially strapped Beitar soccer team. As yet, Lauder hasn't said yes. But he hasn't said no, either.

WHEN Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani met with leading members of ACUM, the society of composers, musicians, writers and publishers, he was invited to become a member. Kahalani qualifies on the basis that he's written two books and a song. But that's not the only reason ACUM would welcome his presence. Chairman Yurik Ben-David and director Ran Kedari, along with Hed Artzi general manager Michael Tunis and other interested parties, are trying to persuade Kahalani to set up a special police task force to crack down on piracy. Kahalani made a pledge to Naomi Shemer, the nation's greatest songwriting luminary, that he would try to put a stop to this kind of theft.

THEY SAY that if you want something done, you'd better get a busy person to do it. Ben-Gurion University's David Newman, at 41 one of the country's youngest professors, is fitting yet another job into his hectic schedule. Newman, a political geographer who for the last three years has run the university's Humphrey Institute for Social Research and was recently appointed editor of the prestigious international journal *Geopolitics and International Boundaries*, is to set up Ben-Gurion's new department of politics and government, focusing on issues of democracy, governance and civil society.

"It's just one more step in the dynamic academic debate going on at the university, which in the last few years has attracted a large group of socially critical scholars," said Newman, an ex-Londoner who came here in 1982 and contributes a weekly op-ed column to *The Jerusalem Post*.

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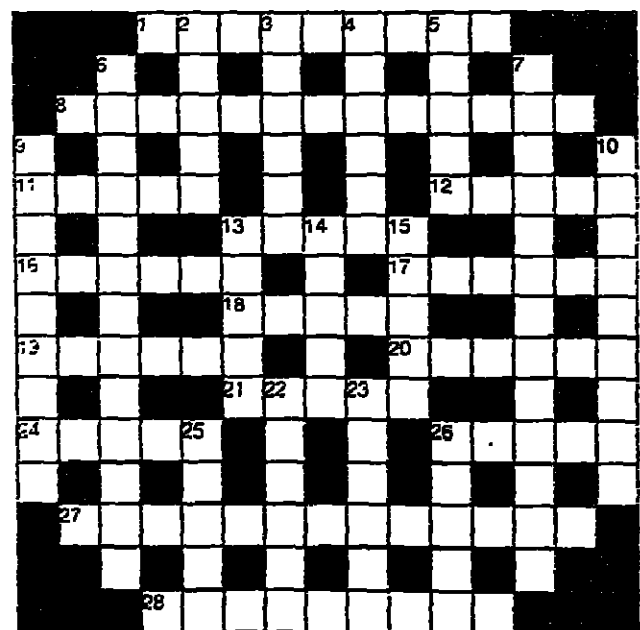
CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Shares a room and has a big laugh (7,2)
- 8 Straining to hear—projection's falling (13)
- 11 Whisky, a production of Israel (5)
- 12 Unstable mountains? (5)
- 13 Members of band run into singer (5)
- 16 Anti-gravity? (6)
- 17 Brave girl finally dropped addictive drug (6)
- 18 From Essex, I leave for life abroad (5)
- 19 Translated verses from China (6)
- 20 A very lucky and most competent... (6)

DOWN

- 2 The last letter one had from Athens (5)
- 3 If successful he gets a lot knocked down (6)
- 4 Book flight from Egypt (6)
- 5 Superior pep-pull? (5)
- 6 Don't speak now—the audience is plastered (5,4,4)



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ACROSS: 1 Legion, 4 Beira, 5 Azzid, 8 Fatima, 10 Epiphany, 11 Tree, 12 Yen, 14 Chio, 15 Tide, 16 Ed, 21 Lead, 23 Goodtime, 25 Cassock, 26 Ibiza, 27 Deane, 28 Height.
DOWN: 1 Leader, 2 Garnish, 3 Ordinance, 4 Hate, 5 Janner, 6 Skewer, 7 Fitzy, 13 Nicotine, 18 Lolling, 17 Florida, 19 Khaki, 20 In part, 22 Arson, 24 Copco.

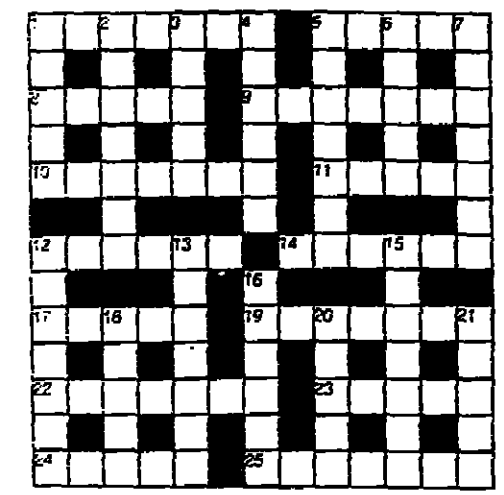
QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Nub (7)
- 5 Recognized (5)
- 8 Foot (5)
- 9 Beg (7)
- 10 Upper-arm bone (7)
- 11 Core (5)
- 12 Seller (6)
- 14 Elaborate meal (6)
- 17 Transparent fabric (6)
- 19 Model (7)
- 22 Archaic (7)
- 23 Freshwater fish (5)
- 24 Robbery (5)
- 25 Sheep's milk cheese (7)

DOWN

- 2 Whimsy (5)
- 3 Vitamin B (7)
- 4 Bury (5)
- 6 Lubricant (6)
- 7 Sauce (7)
- 8 Greek letter (5)
- 9 Written musically (7)
- 12 Tramp (7)
- 13 Consume gluttonously (7)
- 15 Feet (7)
- 16 Epistle (6)
- 18 Pawnbroker (5)
- 20 Caper (5)
- 21 Additional (5)



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Saturday, June 13

Jerusalem: Hadassah Ein Kerem (internal, surgery, orthopedics, ophthalmology, ENT); Shaare Zedek (pediatrics); Bikur Holim (pediatrics).

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ART GUIDE

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ISRAEL
Katzir 34/12
Tiberias 37/21
Haifa 29/21
Tel Aviv 31/20
Jerusalem 30/18
Dead Sea 41/22
Beersheba 34/17
Ariel 36/13
Eilat 40/25

Israel: Sunshine and patchy clouds today. Highs 28-42. Fair tonight. Lows 12-25. Mostly sunny and breezy tomorrow. Highs 28-42.

NORTH AMERICA WEATHER TODAY

Albuquerque 34/20
Anchorage 14/0
Bakersfield 34/20
Baltimore 34/20
Boston 34/20
Buffalo 34/20
Calgary 18/4
Chicago 28/18
Cincinnati 34/20
Cleveland 34/20
Dallas 34/20
Denver 24/9
Detroit 34/20
Houston 34/20
Los Angeles 21/13
Miami 32/25
Minneapolis 34/20
New York City 27/18
Philadelphia 34/20
Portland 34/20
San Francisco 21/13
Seattle 27/12
Tampa 34/20
Vancouver 18/4
Washington 27/18
Winnipeg 27/13

EUROPE WEATHER TODAY

Amsterdam 12/4
Berlin 17/7
Copenhagen 18/9
London 14/8
Madrid 23/10
Moscow 32/18
Paris 15/6
Rome 25/12
Vienna 20/10
Warsaw 27/17
Zurich 17/7

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

ISRAEL CITIES

City	Today	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Amal	35/67 13/55	35/67 13/55	34/63 12/51	34/63 12/51
Beersheba	34/63 12/51	34/63 12/51	33/59 12/47	33/59 12/47
Dead Sea	41/106 22/71	41/106 22/71	39/102 20/67	39/102 20/67
Eilat	40/104 23/70	40/104 23/70	37/96 21/70	37/96 21/70
Haifa	28/64 16/44	28/64 16/44	27/60 15/40	27/60 15/40
Jerusalem	30/68 18/48	30/68 18/48	29/64 17/44	29/64 17/44
Katmon	34/63 12/51	34/63 12/51	33/59 12/47	33/59 12/47
Nesher	30/68 18/48	30/68 18/48	29/64 17/44	29/64 17/44
Tel Aviv	31/68 19/48	31/68 19/48	30/64 18/44	30/64 18/44
Tiberias	37/68 21/48	37/68 21/48	35/64 19/44	35/64 19/44

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

City	Today	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Amsterdam	12/51 5/41	12/51 5/41	11/47 4/37	11/47 4/37
Berlin	17/52 10/42	17/52 10/42	16/48 9/38	16/48 9/38
Brussels	11/52 4/42	11/52 4/42	10/48 3/38	10/48 3/38
Chicago	39/102 22/71	39/102 22/71	37/96 21/70	37/96 21/70
Frankfurt	16/51 9/41	16/51 9/41	15/47 8/37	15/47 8/37
Hong Kong	30/68 18/48	30/68 18/48	29/64 17/44	29/64 17/44
London	14/57 7/47	14/57 7/47	13/53 6/43	13/53 6/43
Los Angeles	21/13 14/3	21/13 14/3	20/9 13/3	20/9 13/3
Madrid	23/10 16/0	23/10 16/0	22/10 15/0	22/10 15/0
Mexico City	29/84 16/44	29/84 16/44	28/80 15/40	28/80 15/40
Montreal	20/68 13/58	20/68 13/58	19/64 12/54	19/64 12/54
Moscow	32/68 25/58	32/68 25/58	31/64 24/54	31/64 24/54
New York	21/13 14/3	21/13 14/3	20/9 13/3	20/9 13/3
Paris	15/52 8/42	15/52 8/42	14/48 7/38	14/48 7/38
Prague	14/57 7/47	14/57 7/47	13/53 6/43	13/53 6/43
Rio de Janeiro	27/77 20/67	27/77 20/67	26/73 19/63	26/73 19/63
Rome	25/77 18/67	25/77 18/67	24/73 17/63	24/73 17/63
Sydney	21/13 14/3	21/13 14/3	20/9 13/3	20/9 13/3
Tokyo	24/77 17/67	24/77 17/67	23/73 16/63	23/73 16/63
Toronto	20/68 13/58	20/68 13/58	19/64 12/54	19/64 12/54
Vienna	20/68 13/58	20/68 13/58	19/64 12/54	19/64 12/54
Warsaw	27/77 20/67	27/77 20/67	26/73 19/63	26/73 19/63
Washington	21/13 14/3	21/13 14/3	20/9 13/3	20/9 13/3
Zurich	11/52 4/42	11/52 4/42	10/48 3/38	10/48 3/38

GYM

Continued from Page 1

Labor MK Ofer Pines decried the composition of the committees, especially the municipality's, and called for an independent government board of inquiry.

Ehud Stein, the lawyer for the Maccabiah Games Australian delegation, which is suing the government and World Maccabiah for damages following the bridge collapse at the games last year that killed four people, did not put much stock in the establishment of the various committees.

According to Stein, the Agmon committee that investigated the Arad tragedy three years ago, where three fans at a rock concert were killed and 60 injured in a stampede, presented findings that - had they been implemented - could have prevented the Maccabiah tragedy. Those findings, he said, were not implemented.

"There are similarities between the Maccabiah Games and Beersheba," Stein said. "It is called building in a reckless manner."

Communications Minister

Limor Livnat, who recently returned from a visit to Australia, where she met with families of those killed in the Maccabiah Games, told him, "It wouldn't hurt if we were more careful. But tragedies can always happen, even if all the necessary measures are taken."

The ceiling collapsed as a dozen 12-15 year-old boys were practicing, along with their coach. Nine of the boys and the coach were able to flee the gym after hearing the ceiling crack. Zeltzer was trapped at the entrance, and Kavalo and Toledo were trapped inside. Hundreds of soldiers and volunteers dug through the debris into the early hours of the morning, looking for signs of life.

The school was closed yesterday and will remain closed while the building is being inspected for further damage. Psychologists were brought to the Neot Midbar Hotel in the city, where the school's students met yesterday. Parents of Beersheba high school pupils threatened to keep their children home pending the outcome of the investigations.

IDF

Continued from Page 1

Shahak's comments do not clash with Labor Party leader Ehud Barak's plan to draft yeshiva students. Barak's spokeswoman Merav Parsi said. Barak is aware that the IDF is not yet prepared to receive many yeshiva students into its ranks, she said, adding: "His bill is not intended for implementation today to tomorrow."

Also, Barak does not believe that they will all be combat soldiers, but sees them in areas in which they can excel, like computers. "Barak's message is mainly that the burden of conscription needs to be more evenly divided," Parsi said.

Barak's plan was approved at last night's Labor central committee meeting, and it was also decided to impose party discipline on the issue.

YASSIN

Continued from Page 1

Zahar said he hopes Yassin will return to Gaza tomorrow.

Meanwhile, Channel 2 reported last night that to encourage the Palestinians to reach an agreement on the second and third redeployments, Israel is considering granting the Palestinians a full operational and international license for Dahaniya Airport. The government is also weighing allowing the PA to operate the Gaza seaport without Israeli security surveillance, the report said.

The Prime Minister's Office denied the claims, according to Channel 2.

An official of the Ministry of Transport said in the report that granting the Palestinians an international operating license for the airport would in effect grant official recognition to a Palestinian state. If indeed such issues are currently being considered, he said, then there is cause for concern.

On Wednesday, the head of the CIA, George Tenet, met with Arafat in Gaza and discussed the US proposal for the redeployment in the West Bank. Israeli Radio said Netanyahu also met with Tenet.

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1991

Goalie Osgood making mark for Red Wings



DETROIT (AP) — Forget Olaf Kolzig. Suddenly, the Detroit Red Wings are getting the best goaltending in the Stanley Cup playoffs.

With two shutouts in the Dallas series and a 2-1 victory over Washington in the first game of the finals, Chris Osgood has quietly made a mark for himself in the postseason.

"I think Ozzie is as good a goalie as most in this league," Capitals coach Ron Wilson said as his team prepared for Game 2 of the Finals last night at Joe Louis Arena. "It's funny, if you let a bad goal in or make a mistake, everybody wants to jump on you, look for a chink in your armor. I thought he was very solid (Tuesday night)."

Osgood only had to face 17 shots in Game 1, while Washington's Kolzig faced 31. But he was sharp in the third period when the Red Wings were clinging to a one-goal lead and the Capitals had a number of great opportunities to tie the game.

This could be a career-making series for Osgood, who in his fifth season with the Red Wings is still trying to live down past failures. One picture quickly comes to mind: Osgood crying in the locker room following a series upset by the San Jose Sharks in the first round of the 1994 playoffs. He was vilified in Detroit for that defeat. Another picture: sharing the blame with Mike Vernon in the 1995 Finals sweep by the New Jersey Devils. Now, Osgood is trying to live up to Vernon's accomplishment of winning last year's Finals against the Philadelphia Flyers.

Vernon was eventually traded to San Jose and Osgood given the No. 1 goaltending job. While carrying a reputation as a goalie who

occasionally gives up soft goals, Osgood has also helped to carry the Red Wings into the finals.

Not that the playoffs have been a smooth ride for Osgood. Before the Red Wings pulled out the Western Conference finals with Dallas, the Detroit goalie allowed some questionable goals — including a long shot by Jamie Langenbrunner that gave the Stars a 3-2 overtime victory in Game 5. But Osgood came back with a 2-0 victory in the series clincher two days later. That gave him a 12-6 record, 2.22 goals-against average and .916 save percentage going into the finals.

It appeared to give him some momentum for Game 1 of the championship series. And winning that one further prepared him for last night's game.

"I haven't seen them much," Osgood said of the Capitals. "I wasn't really used to playing against them. I didn't know their players' tendencies or what they like to do with the puck. I think I learned a lot from the last game of what they like to do."

Detroit coach Scotty Bowman couldn't have been happier for Osgood after his strong Game 1 performance. "That was a big game for Chris," Bowman said. "His first game of the finals. He was coming off a shutout (in Game 6 of the Western Conference finals). I don't think we have to discuss Chris much more. Just look at his record. It speaks for itself."

Earlier, Kolzig was a goalie everyone has been talking about in the playoffs. He has been showing the way for the Capitals since the start. In 17 games prior to the finals, he was 12-5 in 17 games with a playoff-leading .946 save percentage, four shutouts and 1.69 goals-against. The Red Wings beat him Tuesday night by doing what a team has to do against any hot goalie — create traffic in front of the net and just keep firing.

France open quest for World Cup vs S. Africa



MONTE CARLO — The World Cup may have started already, but for the host nation, the Coupe du Monde really kicks off today when France play South Africa.

For the Africans, it is a new chapter of sporting history, overcoming almost three decades of international rejection because of apartheid to claim its first entry in the biggest festival of soccer.

Only victory will be enough for the French, hot favorite to win Group C and go perhaps as far as the final. Anything gained for the South Africans will be a welcome surprise, knowing their best chances to advance will come against Saudi Arabia and Denmark.

So expect a defensive wall put up by the South Africans, forcing French star Zinedine Zidane to produce some fireworks before an adoring hometown crowd of 60,000 at the Stade Velodrome.

"We will be condemned to take risks," said French coach Aimé Jacquet.

It's exactly what South Africa are counting on. Hold tight at the back and hope for a miracle break. "We have nothing to lose," said South African coach Philippe Troussier. "If you think about

France-South Africa, you say okay, South Africa have no chance. But in soccer, there is no logic." The pressure, though, will hang heavy in the Mediterranean air.

"We will be at the epicenter of the World Cup, it's a heavy burden," said Jacquet, whose season-long quest to find a dependable striker for France is still unfinished going into the finals.

Despite their great potential in defense and midfield, it is inspirational finishing that has been lacking. Stephane Guivarch may have been top scorer in the French league over the past two seasons, but he has scored only a paltry single goal for Les Bleus.

He could likely be partnered by Christophe Dugarry, another forward known best for his futility in a French jersey.

If not goals, he'll be there for brains in what is expected to be a very physical match. "I'll be one of the toughest forwards. I'll be going to battle, I know how." Beauty is already off the charts. "If we win just with 1-0, but we win the World Cup, people will only remember we won the tournament," said forward Youri Djorkaeff.

South Africa's Troussier agrees. "It will be a rough game," he said. Apart from the opposition, the immensity of the challenge is daunting. "To play the host is the biggest task. It's a dream come true," said Mark Fish, who is set to start against France.

Ventura, Belle fireworks lift Chisox

White Sox win in 11th despite McGwire's 30th HR; Mariners stop Giants' streak

CHICAGO (AP) — Robin Ventura hit a tying homer with two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning, then connected for a two-run drive in the 11th to lift the Chicago White Sox to a 10-8 win over the St. Louis Cardinals on Wednesday.

Mark McGwire's major league-leading 30th homer helped the Cardinals take a 7-0 lead into the sixth. Albert Belle had a pair of three-run homers for the White Sox, matching his career high with six RBIs. Chicago trailed 8-4 in the ninth with two outs and the bases empty. But Belle and Ventura connected for consecutive homers to tie it.

Rockies 9, Rangers 8
Dante Bichette became the first player in Colorado history to hit for the cycle, winning the game at Coors Field with a long single with two outs in the 10th inning. Bichette doubled in the fourth, homered in the sixth and tripled in the ninth. He finished with five RBIs and scored twice.

Dodgers 1, Athletics 0
Pitcher Ismael Valdes, supposedly close to being sent to Seattle last week in a trade for Randy Johnson, pitched a two-hitter for his first complete game since 1995. Valdes (5-7) did not give up a hit until Matt Stairs singled with two outs in the top of the seventh inning. He struck out nine as Los Angeles won at Oakland. The Dodgers held on in the ninth inning after left fielder Roger Cedeno — a defensive replacement — dropped Scott Spiezio's fly ball for a two-base error with one out.

Mariners 4, Giants 1
San Francisco's 11-game winning streak came to an end as David Segui drove in three runs for visiting Seattle. The Mariners had lost four in a row. Giants starter Orel Hershiser left the game in the fifth inning after being hit on the right wrist by Alex Rodriguez's line drive.

Diamondbacks 10, Angels 2
Jay Bell homered, tripled and drove in three runs and Arizona stopped Anaheim's nine-game winning streak. Travis Lee and Matt Williams also homered for the host Diamondbacks. Omar Daal (2-4), making just his 16th start in 222 career appearances, gave up one earned run and four hits in eight innings.

Yankees 6, Expos 2
New York won its season-high ninth in a row, overcoming a knee injury to Bernie Williams to beat Montreal at Olympic Stadium. Williams left the game shortly after hurting his right knee on an awkward slide.

Hideki Iribu (6-1), who leads the majors with a 1.59 ERA, became the first Yankees pitcher to get a hit in a regular-season game since Larry Gowell on Oct. 4, 1972.

New York's Tim Lincecum, playing his first game in Montreal since leaving the Expos after the 1990 season, stole the 800th base of his career. He joined Rickey Henderson, Lou Brock and Ty Cobb as the only players to reach the mark.

Brewers 9, Royals 6 (15)
Jerome Burnitz singled home the go-ahead run in the 15th



DUSTED — Yankees pitcher Hideki Iribu, who earlier had singled, is sent sprawling after being brushed back by Expos pitcher Dustin Hermanson during sixth-inning action at Montreal's Olympic Stadium.

inning as Milwaukee won on a long night at Kansas City. There was a 59-minute rain delay in the 10th inning, and the game was the longest for both teams since the Brewers beat the Royals 4-3 in 15 innings at Milwaukee last Sept. 24. Bronswell Patrick (1-0) got his first major league win with six innings of relief, allowing only one unearned run.

Blue Jays 4, Marlins 3
Jose Canseco hit two home runs in front of a hometown crowd, and Toronto averted a three-game sweep at Miami. Canseco, born in Havana but raised in South Florida, hit a 439-foot homer in the first inning. Playing in front of 60 friends and family members, he

hit a solo homer in the 10th.

Pirates 4, Indians 3 (11)
Jennaine Allensworth doubled home the go-ahead run in the 11th inning off Jose Mesa as Pittsburgh won at Cleveland. Tony Womack had two hits and drove in two runs for the Pirates. His single set up Allensworth's double.

Orioles 5, Phillies 2
Rafael Palmeiro again came out ahead in a matchup with Mark Leiter, hitting a tiebreaking single in the 10th inning at Philadelphia. Palmeiro is 13-for-20 (.650) with three home runs lifetime against Leiter. B.J. Surhoff added a two-run single in the 10th for Baltimore.

Red Sox 10, Braves 6
John Valentin hit two home runs

in a game for the third time this season, and an expected pitching duel between Boston's Pedro Martinez and Atlanta's Denny Neagle never developed at Turner Field. Martinez (7-2) gave up four home runs, including Andres Galaraga's 24th and 25th of the year. Neagle (7-4) was tagged for a season-high seven earned runs.

Mets 3, Devil Rays 2

Al Leiter won his fourth consecutive start and New York took advantage of five walks in the first inning by Tampa Bay's Rick White. The Mets won at home despite getting just four hits, including Butch Huskey's home run.

Astros 10, Tigers 3

INTERLEAVE
Tampa Bay 000 100 001-2 6 0
New York 200 001 000-3 4 0
White, Chen (7) and Dierker, A.L. Leiter, Womack (7), Cook (6) and Piazza, A.Gallardo (6). W-Letter, 7-3. L-White, 0-3. S-White (2). H-R-New York, Huskey (6).

Seattle 201 010 000-1 10 1
San Francisco 000 010 000-1 6 1
Seattle, Spitzer (6) and Merzario; Hershiser, Pineda (6), Tanaka (6) and L-Johnson. W-Seattle, 6-3. L-Hershiser, 6-4. S-Seattle (1).

Houston 025 000 000-1 9 1
Detroit 000 000 111-3 6 0
Schwarck, Scanlon (6), T.Miller (6) and Sweeney, F.Gonzalez, Sager (6), Kestner (6), Crow (7), Worrell (6), T.Jones (6) and J.Oliver. W-Schwarck, 3-1. L-F.Gonzalez, 2-5. H-R-Houston, Alou (4), Detroit, J.Oliver (4).

Toronto 200 001 000-1 9 1
Florida 012 000 000-1 11 0
Hartigan, Piazza (7), Person (6), R.Flyers (10) and Galaraga; Fortson (6), Mantel (7), Edmonson (6), Garrettsburg (10), J.Powell (10) and Zann, W-Person, 1-0. L-F.Powell, 4-4. S-R-Flyers (16), H-R-Toronto, Canseco (219), T.Fernandez (6).

Pittsburgh 001 010 101 01-4 15 0
Cleveland 001 000 002 00-3 10 0
(11 Innings)
Shaw, Christensen (7), Loefer (6), Loefer (11) and Kendall, Naps, M.Jackson (6), Mesa (10) and S.Adomer. W-Loefer, 4-3. L-Mesa, 3-2.

AMERICAN LEAGUE
East Division
W L Pct. GB
New York 44 13 .780 —
Boston 36 26 .581 1 1/2
Toronto 32 30 .516 2 1/2
Baltimore 30 34 .469 3 1/2
Tampa Bay 27 37 .422 4 1/2

Central Division
Cleveland 38 26 .594 —
Minnesota 28 34 .452 9
Detroit 25 37 .403 12
Chicago 23 38 .377 13 1/2
Kansas City 23 39 .371 14

West Division
Texas 39 24 .619 —
Anaheim 35 26 .574 3
Seattle 27 35 .435 10 1/2
Oakland 26 37 .412 11

Moises Alou and Carl Everett each drove in three runs and Houston finished off a three-game sweep at Tiger Stadium.

Twins 5, Cubs 1

Todd Walker had a two-run single, and Minnesota strung together six straight two-out hits in a five-run first inning against Chicago. The crowd of 15,086 was the smallest of the interleague series.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Padres 2, Reds 1

Ken Caminiti hit his first home since April 23 and Kevin Brown tied a career high with 10 strikeouts as San Diego completed a three-game sweep of visiting Cincinnati.

St-Louis (12), H-R-Cleveland, Fryman (10).

New York 200 001 000-3 4 0
Montreal 001 000 100-5 6 2
Iribu, Nelson (7), Shannon (6) and Posada; Hershiser, Pineda (6), Tanaka (6) and L-Johnson. W-Iribu, 6-1. L-Hershiser, 6-4. S-Iribu (2). H-R-New York, Huskey (6).

Baltimore 000 010 000-1 9 1
(10 Innings)
Erickson, Mills (6), A.Santana (6) and Webster; T.Green, Gomez (7), Spradlin (6), M.Lehner (10) and Lieberthal. W-A.Santana, 2-1. L-M.Lehner, 2-2.

Boston 202 001 000-1 13 0
Atlanta 000 102 000-6 11 0
Pittsburgh, Mahay (7), Garza (6), Gordon (6) and Verbeeke; Neagle, Garner (6), Lyleberg (6) and Lopez. W-Pittsburgh, 7-2. L-Neagle, 7-4. H-R-Boston, J.Vladimir (2), M.Lehner (10), Bulfinch (6), Atlanta, C.Jones (17), Galaraga (2) (25), Kestner (10).

Chicago 010 000 000-1 4 0
Minnesota 000 000 000-0 2 0
Trachsel, Back (6) and Sweeney; Morgan, Sweeney (7), Trachsel (6), Guardado (6), Aguilar (6) and Starbach. W-Morgan, 9-2. L-Trachsel, 5-2. S-Sweeney (12).

Due to technical difficulties, not all line scores are available.

National League
East Division
W L Pct. GB
Atlanta 45 20 .692 —
New York 35 25 .583 7 1/2
Philadelphia 39 27 .591 10 1/2
Houston 24 39 .381 20
Florida 19 45 .297 25 1/2

Central Division
Houston 40 24 .625 —
Chicago 38 25 .603 1 1/2
Pittsburgh 33 32 .507 7 1/2
Milwaukee 30 31 .492 8 1/2
St-Louis 33 46 .415 19 1/2
Cincinnati 28 37 .431 12 1/2

West Division
San Francisco 41 25 .621 —
San Diego 40 25 .615 1/2
Los Angeles 32 32 .500 8
Colorado 26 39 .400 14 1/2
Arizona 20 44 .313 20

No minute's silence for Nigeria

PARIS (Reuters) — Nigeria's request for a minute's silence at the World Cup as a mark of respect for the late military ruler Sani Abacha was turned down by FIFA yesterday.

Nigeria had asked world soccer's governing body for a minute's silence before their opening match against Spain in Nantes tomorrow following Abacha's sudden death on Monday.

Nigerian team spokesman Austin Mgbolu said FIFA had also been asked permission for players to wear black arm bands and for the Nigerian flag to be flown at half mast.

"The flag will be at half mast and the Nigerian delegation can decide that their players will wear armbands," a FIFA spokesman said. "But there will be no minute's silence. We regard the flag at half mast as sufficient."

During his spell in power Abacha repeatedly broke promises to restore democratic rule.

BULLS

Continued from Page 24

After showing some life when it looked like they were dead by coming back from a seven-point deficit and tying the game, the Jazz couldn't sustain the run and make enough big plays in the final three minutes.

As in Game 2, the Jazz allowed Chicago to grab nearly every important offensive rebound, including seven by Rodman and five by Pippen. Jordan had two late spin moves on Shandon Anderson. The first gave the Bulls the lead for good; the second gave Chicago a three-point lead with

1:38 left.

Jordan shot an airball with 48 seconds left, but Malone was called for a loose ball foul when he got tangled with Rodman. The Worm calmly sank both shots, making it 81-77 with 43.8 seconds left, and Utah couldn't recover. John Stockton drove for a reverse layup and missed, and the ball was batted around by four players until Ron Harper grabbed it.

Toni Kukoc was fouled and made both shots with 26.6 seconds left, upping the lead to six.

That was pretty much the end for Utah, which now faces a nearly impossible task. Only six teams in NBA history have come back from 3-1 deficits, although it has never happened in the finals. And the Jazz will have to find a way to win on Chicago's home court, where the Bulls haven't lost in the finals since 1993.

"It's not a good situation to be in," Stockton said. "We have one game to play, and if we win, it's a different situation. We go home for two games and anything can happen. One win can change the whole complexion of things."

The Bulls, whose home winning streak reached seven games, have

won their last 26 playoff series when they led after three games.

The Jazz, unable to run their offense smoothly because of Chicago's size and tenacity on defense, shot only 42 percent and also had just two players reach double figures.

Malone was Utah's leading scorer with 21 points, and Bryon Russell reached 10 by making a meaningless 3-pointer at the final buzzer. Stockton shot 3-for-11 and Jeff Hornacek was 3-for-8.

The Jazz didn't reach 54 points — their infamous total from Sunday night's record-setting loss — until Howard Easley made a free throw with 38.4 seconds left in the third. Easley's second free throw pulled Utah to 58-55, but Pippen responded with a 3-pointer — his fifth of the night — to help give the Bulls a 61-57 lead entering the fourth.

A pair of foul shots by Luc Longley gave the Bulls another seven-point lead early in the fourth. Shandon Anderson's three-point play cut it to four, and Stockton's jumper with 6:45 left made it 68-66. A minute and a half later, Anderson drove for a layup, pulling Utah within one, and

Stockton fed Chris Morris for a fast break layup with five minutes left that gave the Jazz their first lead since the first quarter, 70-69.

Hornacek's layup off a missed jumper by Jordan made it 72-72 with 3:12 left. Rodman rolled in two free throws — the first one bounced on the rim five times — to make it 74-72.

"The guys steps up and makes four free throws in the closing minutes, what can you say?" Jordan said of Rodman. "He may go to work tomorrow. There's no understanding Dennis, but as long as he steps on court he does his job. Somehow, he's always ready to play — especially when time is of the essence."

Utah 18 18 20 25-52
Chicago 21 18 22 25-58
UTAH (82) Russell 2-7 2-4 10, Malone 10-21 14 21, Kestner 2-4 2-4 8, Stockton 3-11 1-3 7, Hornacek 3-8 2-2 8, Foster 2-5 0-4 4, Easley 3-8 2-2 8, Crawford 0-0 0-0 0, Anderson 2-3 3-7 7, Morris 4-7 1-2 3, Carr 1-2 0-2 2, Totus 3-7 14-21 82.

CHICAGO (88) Pippen 9-16 5-8 28, Kukoc 3-9 2-8 10, Easley 0-1 2-2 2, Harper 2-7 2-4 5, Burrell 1-5 0-1 2, Kerr 0-3 0-0 0, Buechler 0-0 0-0 0, Totus 2-7 2-7 21-40.
3-Point goals: Utah 2-15 (Russell 2-5, Foster 0-1, Anderson 0-1, Easley 0-2, Stockton 0-3, Morris 0-3, Chicago 5-15 (Pippen 5-10, Harper 0-1, Kukoc 0-2, Kerr 0-2, Foster 0-1, Buechler 0-0 0-0, Totus 0-0 0-0 0).
Rebounds: Utah 40 (Malone 14), Chicago 61 (Rodman 18, Easley 14, Stockton 13).
Chicago 18 (Pippen 5), Totus 14-24 (Utah 32).
Chicago 19, Technical: Utah coach Sloan, A-23-0-4.

ITALY

Continued from Page 24

Italy, playing in all-white, took the lead with a stunning counter-attack after Ivan Zamorano, who ironically plays for Inter Milan, lost possession deep in the Italian half.

Vieri and Baggio were well advanced with only two Chilean defenders between them and the goal and the 1994 World Cup star collected a long through ball from Paolo Maldini.

Instead of heading for goal, Baggio unselfishly slipped the ball sideways to the better positioned Vieri who slid it home from 15 yards with his left foot.

Chile, aiming to make the second round for only the second time in seven attempts, came back into the game strongly and levelled in the third minute of first half injury time.

Fabian Estay swung in a left-wing corner kick. Zamorano powered in a header, Pedro Reyes touched the ball on and Salas turned to fire the ball home with his left foot.

Four minutes into the second half, Salas struck again, climbing

to a right wing cross, beating Fabio Cannavaro in the air and powering a header between goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca and the post.

Coach Maldini sent on Luigi Di Biagio and Enrico Chiesa for Roberto Di Matteo and Angelo Di Livio to change the pattern. But the Italians still looked vulnerable on the counter-attack and frequently were caught out by high crosses.

Baggio slipped a clever ball through the Chilean defense but goalkeeper Tapia was fast off his line and blocked the striker's first time, close range shot with his legs.

Italy — Gianluca Pagliuca; Alessandro Nesta, Paolo Maldini, Fabio Cannavaro, Alessandro Costacurta, Dino Baggio, Angelo Di Livio (Enrico Chiesa, 61st), Demetrio Albertini, Roberto Di Matteo (Luigi Di Biagio, 58th), Christian Vieri (Filippo Inzaghi, 71st), Roberto Baggio.

Chile — Nelson Tapia; Ronald Fuentes, Pedro Reyes, Javier Margas (Miguel Ramirez, 64th), Moises Villarroel, Francisco Rojas, Nelson Parraguez, Clarence Acuna (Fernando Corcojo, 82nd), Fabian Estay (Jose Sierra, 81st), Ivan Zamorano, Marcelo Salas.

WINNING CARDS
in yesterday's Israel Hebrew daily chance drawing

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